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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation prospectus, HIGH-STAKES TESTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION: UNDERSTANDING ONE PROGRAM'S RESPONSE TO EDTPA, by CARLA LYNN TANGUAY, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy, in the College of Education and Human Development, Georgia State University. The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chairperson, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

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HIGH-STAKES TESTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION: UNDERSTANDING ONE PROGRAM'S RESPONSE TO EDTPA

by

CARLA LYNN TANGUAY

Under the Direction of Dr. Joyce E. Many

ABSTRACT

Some policy makers are requiring the use of national teacher performance assessments for teacher education program completion, certification, approval, and/or license upgrade (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009). Because teacher education is a historically-situated social practice, the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of teacher educators are shaped by personal, programmatic, and institutional contexts and political, social, intellectual, and economic influences (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2016; Delandshere & Petrosky, 2004). Proponents of teacher performance assessment argue that the assessment is an authentic, valid and reliable measure for assessing candidate readiness for teaching and may promote program renewal and professionalize the teaching force (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Wei & Pecheone, 2010). Others recognize unintended consequences of the standardized assessment which may narrow the curriculum (Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Ruddell, 2007), create tensions for teacher candidates who are learning and developing (Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015), and overlook program values important for preparing candidates to teach in a global society (Sato, 2014).

This case study addressed one elementary teacher education program's response to a state-mandate requiring a teacher performance assessment, edTPA® for certification. Teacher educators served as embedded units in the single-case design with the program as the holistic unit of analysis (Yin, 2014). I used the following data sources while conducting on-going analysis of interviews, audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, follow-up interviews and/or emails, and multiple program documents. I conducted an inductive, naturalistic inquiry, generating descriptive findings using constant comparative analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By understanding program educators' perceptions of edTPA and their subsequent actions, others may be informed as they navigate similar issues in high-stakes contexts to act responsively, to avoid pitfalls, and to increase the engagement of multiple stakeholders. Policy makers may consider time for educators to develop knowledge and to explore the educative use of edTPA, while establishing supports for their novices to increase sustainability and to promote program improvement.

INDEX WORDS: Teacher performance assessment; Performance-based; edTPA; TPA, PACT; Accountability and reform.

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CARLA LYNN TANGUAY

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in

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DEDICATION

For teacher educators and candidates
who I learn from everyday
and who inspired me to give back
in support of the teaching profession.

For my family, especially
my husband, Tim,
my children, Katelyn and Craig,
and
my parents, Jack and Glenda,
who encouraged me along the way.

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Beginning my career as an elementary school teacher, I always knew that I would be a lifelong learner, because I love learning with others and sharing that knowledge in hopes of improving the lives of those around me. After completing my master's degree and an education specialist degree, I survived a serious illness and learned much about perseverance and the important things in life. Shortly after these events, I welcomed the opportunity to become a full-time teacher educator. Working in higher education for ten years as a part-time instructor, prior to my full-time appointment, followed by ten years as a clinical instructor, I had the opportunity to move on to pursue my Ph.D. journey. I will be ever thankful to the people who mentored me along the way and encouraged me from the beginning.

I would not have a study had it not been for the people who agreed to participate in it. I am thankful that they were willing to give their time and to share their professional experiences with me. I learned so much from each of them as they responded to a state mandate that led to many changes in their work life. Thank you for your willingness and patience in the process and for allowing me to learn from you and with you.

To all of my colleagues who have mentored me on this journey, I have great admiration and thankfulness. Joyce Many, my dissertation chair, is a brilliant scholar, professor, teacher, mentor, and confidence builder. Not only am I grateful to have worked with her the last 10 years of my career; but also, I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to become the receiver of her expertise, high expectations, never-ending time, kindness, and encouragement. I will be ever grateful to her as a role model, friend and colleague, and hope to mirror her example in my service to others.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Teacher performance assessments (TPAs) were developed by teacher educators in response to historical, social, economic, and political influences that have shaped the public's perception and policy on education in the U.S. (Cochran-Smith, Villegas, Abrams, Chavez-Moreno, & Mills, 2016). Education stakeholders (i.e., the public, policy makers, think tanks, educational funders, and even teacher educators) have been persuaded by U. S. economic and political imperatives to maintain strength domestically and internationally, as measured by student achievement scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Ravitch, 2013; Wilson & Tamir, 2008). Some stakeholders question the integrity of the U. S. educational system and have blamed teachers and the programs who prepared them, as gaps have persisted among historically marginalized groups of learners despite other potential systemic factors (Kumashiro, 2012; Ravitch, 2013; Wilson & Tamir, 2008). Additionally, the public's attention has been drawn to historical events, such as Sputnik and the space race in 1957, and to alarming reports, such as *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), escalating their concerns about the nation's competitiveness and its educational health in a global society (Ravitch, 2013). More recently, politically-charged reformers, aiming to privatize education, further contributed to public concern by sending messages proposing competition via school choice and school vouchers, while some perceive jeopardizing public education threatening to U. S. democracy (Ravitch, 2013; Zeichner, Payne, & Brako, 2015; Zeichner & Pena-Sandoval, 2015).

Thus, education reform initiatives have aimed at the improvement of K-12 schools and their teachers and have emphasized, most recently, a standards-based curricula and standardized assessments (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2016; Delandshere & Arens, 2001). Simultaneously, teacher educators have faced pressure for increased transparency and accountability focused on teacher preparation in a rapidly changing 21st century global economy (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009; Delandshere & Petrosky, 2004; Newton, 2010). Proponents advocating for a professionalized teaching force have developed teacher performance assessments (TPAs), arguing for the use of a valid and reliable measure of teacher effectiveness and an authentic yet standardized way to assess teacher candidate readiness for teaching that may be beneficial for program improvement (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014; Wei & Pecheone, 2010). However, when TPAs have been used for program completion, certification/approval, accreditation, and/or graduation, the initiative has been met with responses from some educators who do not view the efforts as promoting reform but rather as a threat to their autonomy over their profession (Allington, 2005; Wilson & Tamir, 2008; Zeichner, Payne, & Brayko, 2015). Some teacher educators have recommended caution regarding the use of teacher performance assessments in high-stakes contexts, in non-educative ways such as teaching to the test at the program endpoint (Whittaker & Nelson, 2013), which lead to consequences for teacher candidates (Bunch, Aguirre, & Tellez, 2009; Chung, 2008; Lit & Lotan, 2013; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; Meuwissen, Choppin, Shang-Butler, & Cloonan, 2015; Okhremtchouk et al., 2009) and their teacher preparation programs (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013; Wei & Pecheone, 2010).

In this study, I considered stakeholders' evolving conceptualizations of teacher quality and teaching effectiveness and their perspectives on teaching and learning to understand the

evolving teacher performance assessment movement. In this study, I discuss the problem that has developed for teacher educators who are preparing preservice teachers for teaching in states where teacher performance assessments have become a mandated policy response to public concerns, challenging educators' professional autonomy and giving them little time to prepare.

Teacher Quality and Teaching Effectiveness

Teacher education is a historically-situated social practice, and the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of teacher educators are shaped by personal, programmatic, and institutional contexts (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2016). As a result, it is critical to understand how educators' and policy-makers' definitions of "teacher quality" and "teaching quality" and/or teaching effectiveness have been conceptualized (Knight, et al., 2015, p. 105) and have resulted in the popularity of teacher performance assessments to measure teacher-candidate readiness for teaching in a diverse 21st century, knowledge society (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Delandshere & Petrosky, 2004; Zeichner, 2014). I will discuss stakeholders' concerns for teacher quality considering teachers' varying characteristics (i.e., inputs) and their influence on student achievement as well as teaching quality or teachers' behaviors and performance measured by standardized achievement tests (i.e., outputs) and the effect on student achievement. Furthermore, I will account for federal legislation aimed at teacher quality and teaching effectiveness. Additionally, I will address teacher educators' approaches to preparing teacher candidates in the knowledge society and global economy, leading up to their use of teacher performance assessments as a measure of accountability.

Teacher Quality/Characteristics

With increasing public awareness of student achievement gaps and concern for the educational health of the nation, stakeholders considered the impact of teacher quality as

indicated by varying characteristics on student achievement. Researchers focused on the knowledge of the teacher, privileging teacher candidates' content knowledge and verbal ability as measured on standardized admissions achievement tests (i.e., SAT, ACT, GRE), their educational backgrounds (i.e., GPA; majors), certification exams used to measure their preparation, and the reputation of their degree seeking institutions (Knight, et al., 2015; Wilson & Tamir, 2008; Wilson & Youngs, 2005; Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). Zumwalt and Craig (2008) indicated some correlational research shows a relationship between teachers' verbal ability and student achievement; however, it does not account for the relationships between verbal ability and other characteristics of teacher quality. Considering other teacher characteristics, such as the comparison of content knowledge majors to education majors, the research is scant, except in mathematics where a correlation is noted between teachers' mathematics content knowledge and high-school students' achievement in mathematics (Floden & Meniketti, 2005; Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). In another study, researchers noted greater gains in student learning in mathematics and English language arts, comparing candidates taught by faculty from university-based programs in comparison to Teach for America and New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTF). Although the former university-based programs were initially more effective, the latter programs caught up (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2006). Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow (2002) discussed concerns about policies lowering standards for entry into the profession and noted that retention, sense of preparedness/efficacy outcomes were significantly higher for university-based programs than TFA, the Peace Corps, and Teacher Opportunity Corps; however, there was variation in the university-based programs. Considering research on the relationship of teacher characteristics in relation to student achievement has been an area long

seen as pertinent to policy discussions on teacher preparation and the requirements that states establish to determine teaching readiness (Wayne & Youngs, 2003).

Teaching Quality/Performance and Effectiveness

In addition to an emphasis on teacher characteristics, as a way of considering teacher inputs, policy-makers have also been interested in raising student achievement scores, or outputs, on standardized tests as measured by teachers' behaviors and/or classroom performance (Brophy & Good, 1986; Knight, et al., 2015). Policy-makers were accepting of researchers' ideas about teacher behaviors as translated on competency-based rating scales of classroom observation performance, although researchers recognized that the simplicity of the ratings were insufficient considering the complexities involved in teaching and learning (Shulman, 1986, 1987b). For example, the ratings may have included a classroom management, lesson opener, or questioning strategy, and experts were not required to have expertise in the content area they were evaluating (Shulman, 1986, 1987b). Shulman (1987a) continued to argue that teaching is an intellectual endeavor involving the teacher's content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge and skills specific to the discipline being taught, and considering this view of teaching, assessments must include these components within the context of the learner in addition to generic skills.

In alignment with this rising performance-based assessment movement beginning in the 1980s, the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession and The Holmes Group (1986) were established and emphasized teaching quality as recognized by improving student achievement (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Lewis & Young, 2013; Tucker & Mandel, 1986). Invited by the Carnegie Task Force, Lee Shulman and Gary Sykes prepared a position paper presenting an analysis of the knowledge base of teaching and new approaches to assessment with the idea that a national board would take on the responsibility (Shulman,

1987a). New assessment approaches included the ideas of an assessment center engaging candidates in simulated practices, a video-component requirement of teaching practice, documentation by university supervisors and mentor teachers serving as coaches in the field, and documentation portfolios (Shulman, 1987a). Thus, in 1987, an organization called the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was established to address concerns about teaching quality, and subsequently, the board developed standards in 1994 to measure teacher performance on the job and tied it to national certification for accomplished teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009; Sato, 2014). Additionally, the National Research Council insisted on a wider range of authentic assessment measures to evaluate preservice teachers beyond standard admissions criteria and licensure content-based exams, which had not been shown to predict future teacher effectiveness (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Mitchell, Robinson, Plake, & Knowles, 2001). Darling-Hammond and Snyder (2000), like Shulman (1987a), highlighted similar authentic measures of assessment also including case studies and problem-based inquiries. Although research evidence on accreditation, teacher testing, and certification was noted as inconclusive on improving student achievement (Wilson & Youngs, 2005), educators recognize the difficulty with causal research and noted that lack of research evidence does not indicate that relationships do not exist (Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). For example, in a mixed-methods study conducted by Smith, Gordan, Colby, and Wang (2005), National Board-Certified Teachers' students presented deeper learning outcomes more frequently than the non-certified teachers.

Federal Legislation Aimed at Teacher Quality and Teaching Effectiveness

Changing conceptualizations of teacher quality and teaching effectiveness are acknowledged in federal legislation. For example, *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* required

states to assess teacher quality measured by verbal ability and content knowledge (U. S. Department of Education, 2002). Legislation continued in 2009 with the *Race to the Top* state funds, demanding indicators of teaching effectiveness tied to teacher evaluation systems and value-added measures, based on student achievement scores (U. S. Department of Education, 2009). Since states received federal funding (e.g., *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, *Race to the Top Executive Summary 2009*), they were required to demonstrate accountability by making the assessment outcomes of their teacher preparation program graduates' effectiveness on student learning transparent to the public. Additionally, states were required to embed the *InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and Learning Progressions for Teachers 1.0 (2013)*, developed by the Chief Council of State School Officers and adopted by the new accrediting body, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The standards were created to ensure learners were college and career ready and teacher education programs demonstrated alignment and accountability. State agencies created their own standards, aligned to national standards, to maintain state control. Therefore, teacher preparation programs focused on developing teacher candidates' knowledge, performance, and dispositions as aligned to professional teaching standards and focused on student learning (Berliner, 2005; Knight, et al., 2015). Differing from the performance-based movement of the 1980s, which focused on a generic set of standards with lack of consideration for content and context, the new standards specified the criticality of subject-specific pedagogy and the emphasis placed upon teachers to know their learners within their contexts for learning (Wayne & Youngs, 2003).

More recently, *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* provides Title II funds for teacher education partnerships with P-12 schools, while permitting *teacher academies* or fast tracks, thus eliminating certification rules to get teachers in the classrooms faster and opening the doors for

venture capitalists and the privatization of education (U. S. Department of Education, 2015; Zeichner & Pena-Sandoval, 2015). With an agenda to compete and move ahead in a global economy and with private markets flourishing in a capitalist society, neoliberals have also had an impact on educational policy and reform efforts in teacher preparation. Neoliberals question teacher quality and demand teacher education transparency and new accountability measures. In a deregulated market, neoliberals desire competition and *choice* in education, rather than regulation and bureaucracy, claiming that more talented people, often already holding bachelor's degrees in other fields but without teaching certification, should have opportunities to be teachers (Wilson & Tamir, 2008). For example, private and philanthropic groups, such as the New Schools Venture Fund (NSVF), are investing in education by promoting deregulation policies and alternative routes in teacher education outside of universities and colleges, making it easier for inexperienced teachers to get into classrooms, particularly in schools serving the least well-served (Oakes, Franke, Quartz, & Rogers, 2002; Zeichner & Pena-Saldova, 2015). They propose scripted curriculums for teachers, which they believe make it easy for those with little training. Additionally, some stakeholders are strong proponents of *practice-based* education, defined as a skills-oriented approach with little attention to social foundations, learning theory, or content methods courses (Zeichner, 2012). Proponents of such “fast track” approaches (e.g. from Teach for America, Relay Graduate School of Education, Teach NOLA, The New Teacher Project, KIPP) are focused on preparing teachers as technicians, rather than as professionals (Zeichner, 2012). Through such avenues, the least prepared teachers end up taking jobs in high-need schools and teaching the least well-served students, leading to higher teacher attrition and increased shortages in K-12 schools. This cycle contributes to the *churn* or continuous turnover (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Zeichner, 2014). Herein lies a problem for teacher educators who

believe in public school education. Concerned that the intended reforms are not reforms at all, teacher educators advocate that all learners receive an equitable, free education in a democratic society, rather than serve as commodities in the free market.

Teaching in the Knowledge Society

In addition to legislation requiring teacher-education program alignment to new state and national standards, the end of the century saw teacher educators begin to describe teaching effectiveness based on teaching behaviors and performance as the ability to prepare teacher candidates in the knowledge society (Cochran-Smith, et. al, 2016). They shifted their conceptions of how people learn, from methods of transmission, which dominated in years prior to the 1980-1990s, to constructivist approaches to teaching and learning representative of work in a technologically advancing knowledge society. Rather than a view of teaching as the transmission of knowledge where knowledge resides in the teacher and is deposited in the learner as observed in the industrial age, teacher educators acknowledged cognitive and social constructivist approaches to teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005, 2008; Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). Considering cognitive-constructivist approaches, teacher educators held views of knowledge as residing in the learner, providing opportunities for their learners to construct meaning based upon their learners' backgrounds, prior academic knowledge, and *funds of knowledge* as related to specific phenomena (Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Richardson, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). Likewise, teacher educators used social constructivist-compatible approaches where learners co-construct knowledge in social activities with an influential other and in groups, such as learning communities. (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005, 2008; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Richardson, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). Teacher educators who espoused this progressive approach to teaching and learning considered teachers as

reflective practitioners (Schön, 1983), responsible for making professional, intentional judgments (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990).

Recognizing constructivist principles of teaching and learning, teacher educators prioritized the preparation of candidates with deep subject-specific content knowledge and pedagogy for engaging learners in the construction of knowledge through meaningful and technologically-advanced learning opportunities (Cochran-Smith, et. al, 2016; Knight, et. al, 2015; Shulman, 1986, 1987a, 1987b). Other educators emphasized teaching effectiveness based upon the teacher's ability to use "high-leveraged practices," (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Ball & Forzani, 2011, p. 21; Lampert, et al., 2013) and identifying higher order thinking, collaboration, and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986, 1987a, 1987b) as critical for student learning and growth rather than as means to an end on a standardized measure (Knight, et. al, 2015).

To meet the demands of a knowledge economy, teacher educators recognized the need to prepare their candidates to collaborate with others, to engage in inquiry, to solve problems, to reflect on the effectiveness of their solutions, and to propose further inquiries (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2016). Learning in these new ways, teacher candidates sometimes have difficulty enacting new practices with their learners in school contexts where teachers are forced to use scripted curriculums (Tellez, 2008). When schools are not aligned with more progressive teacher preparation program philosophies on teaching and learning, and instead focus on standardized curricula and assessment, teacher candidates digress and mimic these familiar teaching practices as indicated by Lortie's (1975) "apprenticeship of observation." They embrace the ways they were taught, including transmission methods of teaching often requiring memorization on the

part of the student, rather than constructivist approaches learned about in their teacher preparation programs (Tellez, 2008).

Teaching in a Global Economy

To meet the demands of an emerging global economy and increasingly diverse student population and school inequalities, at the turn of the century, teacher educators began taking a critical stance, employing approaches to teaching and learning focused on *diversity and equity* in education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). Paying attention to teacher attrition in schools comprised of under-represented populations most often taught by White, female, and the least experienced teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011), teacher educators considered ways to prepare teacher candidates for teaching in diverse classrooms (Gay, 2000; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Sleeter, 2001; Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). The educators acknowledged that knowledge should not privilege Whites and recognized the need for more teachers of color in a demographically changing U. S. (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Sleeter, 2001).

Policy makers often discount social factors that influence learning, such as poverty, institutional oppression, subtractive curriculums, lack of healthcare and social services, and structural and resource problems in high need schools (Kumashiro, 2008; Ravitch, 2013). Learners from underrepresented populations are often left out of Eurocentric curriculums enacted in K-12 schools, where their very identities are subtracted from their learning experiences, and, school inequality is reinforced through the process of schooling (Gorski, 2016; Kozol, 2005; Kumashiro, 2008; MacLeod, 2009; Valenzuala, 2010; Wilson & Tamir, 2008). MacLeod (2009) underscores how stereotypes and economic inequality, racial and class oppression, and lack of human agency have a profound impact on individual identity and socially constructed attitudes and values.

Thus, teacher educators emphasized the critical need for teachers to provide equitable and accessible opportunities for all their learners, while valuing their assets and building on their prior academic knowledge/skills, personal, family, and community backgrounds, linguistic and cultural experiences (Ball & Tyson, 2011; Cochran-Smith, et. al, 2016; Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). Educators recognized that teachers need to demonstrate a strong *ethic of care* (Noddings, 1988) and high expectations for all learners, characteristics that are more difficult to measure but critical teaching competencies (Oakes, et al., 2002). They identified other important competencies such as teachers' abilities to advocate for the needs of their pupils, their families, and their communities (Grant & Agosto, 2008; Oakes, et al., 2002).

Ladson-Billings (1995) explains that teachers need to understand and use *culturally relevant pedagogy*, by holding high expectations for their learners' *academic success*, by valuing *cultural competence*, and by developing a *critical consciousness*. By promoting academic leadership in their students, teachers help their students resist peer pressure and strive for high educational attainment. Helping their students sustain their cultural values, teachers embrace culture as a tool for learning. Finally, teachers can educate their students to engage in critical analyses of society and their world, advocating for equity in education and democratic engagement (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Developing and maintaining these competencies is challenging for preservice teachers who need strong models from teacher educators and mentor teachers, serving as continued supports for their growth and development.

Hammerness (2001) studied educational reform as related to teachers' personal visions and discovered that teachers with clear, narrowly focused visions close to their practices could sustain their commitments to teaching and use their visions to reflect on their practices. Teacher educators, then, who strive to help teacher candidates find their work meaningful, to be forward

thinking, and to act for their pupils will find that understanding the importance of teacher candidates' development of personal visions may have an impact on their retention in the profession and their commitment to pupil learning (Hammerness, 2001).

While teacher education programs respond to political and economic influences with intellectual agendas focused on cultural relevant pedagogy and social justice while striving for equity in education, much variation still exists across programs (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Sedlak, 2008). Demonstrating inconsistency in achieving these goals, while accounting for strong measures of student achievement, teacher education programs are criticized by outsiders (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). Consequently, teacher educators must wrestle with these challenges due to the misalignment of the goals and purposes for education in an increasingly, diverse economy emphasizing student learning outcomes demanded in a politically-charged environment of accountability. Presenting additional challenges for teacher education programs, proponents of conservative, neoliberal agendas often lack awareness of racism that is still prevalent in the U.S., again, not accounting for the fact that inequalities in education exist. Proponents who hold deficit views on diversity often embrace the meritocracy ideology, insisting that hard work is equivalent to success, without considering the challenging odds (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2016).

Responding to Accountability Issues and Public Perception

Educators recognize that strong, authentic assessments and research tying the teacher preparation of teacher candidates to the achievement of their future learners is needed in professionalizing the profession (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Grossman, 2008; Wei & Pechione, 2010). Teacher educators have suggested the possibility for assessments having construct validity, content validity, interrater reliability, and predictive validity, as now required

by the new accrediting body, the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP, 2013), as a means for elevating the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014; Wei & Pechione, 2010). Teacher educators have been criticized for creating program assessments lacking validity and reliability in measuring teacher-candidate effectiveness associated with student learning and in demonstrating proficiency in providing a shared language of practice regarding what teacher candidates should know and be able to do (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). In a study designed to address that need, Henry, et al. (2013) sought to show relationships between teacher-candidate effectiveness and student learning. They analyzed their own program assessments to examine teacher candidates' progress and performance to see if these measures predicted student learning in their candidates' classrooms as beginning teachers. They found that their program assessments (i.e., student teaching evaluations, summative portfolios, and dispositions) did not measure multiple constructs, as intended to inform the teacher education program, but instead provided a global rating. Furthermore, none of the instruments produced measures that predicted candidates' later effectiveness on student achievement in reading or mathematics (Henry, et al., 2013).

The Intent of Teacher Performance Assessments

Under tremendous pressure for accountability and more authentic assessment of educators entering the profession, teacher educators across the country have shifted toward an exploration of standardized teacher performance assessments (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Sato, 2014). Teacher performance assessments (TPA) are designed to measure teacher candidates' pedagogical-content knowledge and are often used in addition to content-knowledge tests (e.g., Praxis, GACE) (Darling-Hammond, 2010). In some states, institutions are exploring TPAs using

locally developed evaluation measures, while other states have mandated the incorporation of a standardized TPA for preparation programs and require external evaluation of the portfolios for teacher credentialing. Commonly used teacher performance assessments include the following: edTPA® (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity – SCALE, 2016a); the California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA) (Hafner & Maxie, 2006); the *Performance Assessment of California Teachers* (PACT) (Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009; Pecheone & Chung 2006; Pecheone & Chung Wei, 2007); the *Fresno Assessment of Student Teachers* (FAST) (Torgerson, Macy & Beare, 2009); or the *Praxis Performance Assessment of Teachers* (PPAT) (Educational Testing Service, 2016).

While the intent to use TPAs is to professionalize the teaching force and improve teacher preparation, teacher educators have mixed feelings on their use as standardized measures to evaluate teachers, teacher preparation programs, and their candidates (Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Ruddell, 2007; Lit & Lotan, 2013; Meuwissen, & Choppin, 2015; Peck, Gallici, & Sloan, 2010; Peck & McDonald, 2013; Sloan, 2015). Proponents of TPAs are concerned with the professionalism of teaching, valuing the central tenants included in Darling-Hammond's (2006) powerful teacher education components and the educative value of teacher performance assessment (Bunch, Aguirre, & Tellez, 2009; Wei & Pecheone, 2010; Whittaker & Nelson, 2013). Some teacher educators may recognize, in this era of teacher education accountability, the need to develop a common language in the profession, including assessment measures that provide transparency, consistency, and accountability in assessing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of their teacher candidates. Other teacher educators believe that a common language will increase standardization in the profession, discounting other perspectives regarding what may count as knowledge, and are concerned about TPA's limitations, and its resulting discourse

and the potential narrowing of the curriculum (Dover & Schultz, 2016; Lachuk & Koeller, 2015; Lit & Lotan, 2013; Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Rudell, 2007). Teaching is a complex endeavor, requiring the professional and moral judgement of teachers and going beyond their knowledge of facts and performance of skills. Thus, teacher educators are challenged in identifying appropriate common measure(s), aligned philosophically to their program mission and professional perspectives, to assess teacher candidates who are prepared through various routes and in various contexts. In this era of accountability and effectiveness, my study examined the influence of edTPA policy on one elementary teacher education program by examining the teacher educators' response to the mandate to use edTPA as a measure for teacher certification.

Research Question

I used a naturalistic inquiry approach to investigate one program's response to a state mandate requiring a teacher performance assessment for teacher licensure. My guiding question was "How do teacher educators from one elementary teacher preparation program respond to a state-mandate requiring edTPA as a credentialing assessment?"

Purpose

The purpose of my study was to examine a bachelor's degree program leading to initial teacher certification in early childhood and elementary education in Georgia to explore the program as influenced by teacher educators' responses to a state mandate requiring the use of edTPA for teacher credentialing. In this accountability era, I found it beneficial to examine teacher educators' responses to a state mandate requiring teacher preparation accountability, as they facilitated the integration of the high-stakes assessment in their program, while preparing their novice teacher candidates for the teaching profession.

Significance of the Study

I examined the responses of program faculty, within a specific state and local context, to a state mandate requiring high-stakes testing and accountability in teacher preparation. Because teacher education is a historically-situated social practice, the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of teacher educators are shaped by personal, programmatic, and institutional contexts as well as political, social, intellectual, and economic influences at the state and national levels. It was important to understand program leaders' perspectives regarding their experiences with edTPA, to understand how they reconciled personal beliefs and attitudes and how they facilitated the motivation and engagement of faculty in an initiative that was a product of a consequential state mandate. Additionally, by examining teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA, specifically, their tensions with the assessment as a measure of teaching effectiveness, their level of engagement with the assessment, and their perceptions on preservice teacher development and learning in juxtaposition to edTPA, I gained an understanding of educators' responses to the mandate that influenced their subsequent actions. By understanding teacher educators' responses to the edTPA initiative, teacher educators in other contexts may arrive at their own judgements as they navigate similar issues associated with consequential high-stakes teacher performance assessments in teacher preparation.

My Interest in This Study

As a teacher educator and program coordinator in an undergraduate program in early childhood and elementary education in Georgia, I was interested in learning how teacher educators responded within a specific program to the state mandate requiring a high-stakes assessment. As a program leader and edTPA coordinator, I have the responsibility of engaging and motivating faculty in ways that will help them understand the underlying conceptual

framework and constructs of edTPA, while they are negotiating their concerns and philosophical perspectives on the new mandate. To assist them in understanding the assessment so that they have sufficient information to support their perspectives on it, I provide local evaluation training sessions for faculty and facilitate data retreats. At the data retreats, we review teacher candidates' edTPA portfolios to understand candidates' areas of strength and for growth, ultimately setting goals and strategies for program improvement. By establishing program structures, I am learning how to sustain supports for teacher candidates and improve the implementation of the assessment. I was interested in learning from other teacher educators about the structures and processes and the tensions and disturbances they may or may not have developed in response to the mandate.

Additionally, I am responsible for preparing teacher candidates, who will become novice teachers meeting the demands of local school systems and a diverse population of students. Prior to employment as a teacher, candidates must complete edTPA during student teaching, while navigating specific challenges during the process: issues specific to their school contexts, demands associated with teaching every day, and anxiety accompanying a high-stakes assessment. Aiming to support the growth and development of my teacher candidates, while maintaining program identity and institution mission are challenging endeavors. I work in an urban, research-intensive institution with a mission to prepare teacher candidates who are: “informed by research, knowledge and reflective practice; empowered to serve as change agents; committed to and respectful of all learners; and engaged with learners, their families, schools, and local and global communities” (Georgia State University Professional Education Faculty, 2007). While faculty and I support teacher candidates in meeting the criteria to successfully complete edTPA, it is important to me that the institution/program mission is not compromised.

Furthermore, this program emphasizes the preparation of candidates who are facilitators of learning. By incorporating edTPA, the faculty and I have collaborated to ensure teacher candidates continue to have quality field experiences and coursework where they will have opportunities to reflect on their practice in developmentally sequenced placements, specifically making connections between theory and practice and focusing on student learning. While teacher candidates are taking coursework carefully sequenced for them, my responsibility is to work with faculty to embed new experiences, based on assessment data, to improve rather than hinder teacher candidates' experiences. The faculty and I have embedded course signature assignments throughout the program and instructional seminars during student teaching to pace and to guide candidates in the process. As I conducted this case study, I was interested in learning from other program educators as to how they supported teacher candidate development and learning during edTPA implementation. Additionally, I was interested in developing an understanding of teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA as to whether it was a beneficial component in teacher preparation and a fair measure of their teacher candidates' readiness to teach. As many states across the country consider implementing edTPA in a high-stakes environment, understanding how teacher educators have responded to the challenge in Georgia may be useful in identifying strategies to support candidates as well as ways to engage multiple educators in inquiry in order to learn more and to inform policy development.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of my case study was to examine a bachelor's degree program leading to initial teacher certification in early childhood education (pre-kindergarten to fifth grade) in Georgia, outside of my own institution, to explore the teacher educators' response to a state mandate requiring the use of edTPA for teacher credentialing. In an era of teacher preparation

accountability, I wanted to examine teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA and their subsequent actions as they integrated the high-stakes assessment in their program, while preparing their novice teacher candidates for the profession. I used a naturalistic inquiry approach for this study and posed the guiding research question, "How did teacher educators (i.e., administrators, coordinators, department chairs, faculty/course instructors, university supervisors) from one elementary education teacher preparation program respond to a state mandate requiring teacher candidates to pass a teacher performance assessment (i.e., edTPA) for teacher certification?" My sub-questions included the following: "(a) How did educators perceive edTPA? (b) How did educators act in response to the edTPA mandate?"

Stake (1995) describes four characteristics to define case study research. First, case study is "holistic," as qualitative researchers aim to understand the whole of their inquiry. In this case, I defined the whole as the program, examining educators' response to a policy mandate. Second, case study is "empirical," as the researcher relies on information gained from observations and from informants' sharing their experiences in naturalistic settings. Third, case study is "interpretive," based on human interactions and interpretations in the construction of knowledge. Finally, case study is "empathetic" or responsive to the informants' perspectives (Stake, 1995, pp. 47-48). Additionally, qualitative studies afford the reader the opportunity to make their own judgements and to consider their subjectivities (Stake).

Bounded by program context, time, and phenomenon, this study was well suited for case study method. Case study method is appropriate for examining contemporary phenomenon, aiming to understand what can be learned about a problem or issue, such as a state mandate that requires a response from program educators (Stake; Yin, 2014). In this case study, educators were faced with a state-mandated policy requiring the consequential use of edTPA for

certification with little time to obtain knowledge and understanding of the assessment content and use or to prepare for implementation with their teacher candidates. Employing case study, I uncovered the “how” and the “why” behind the results with in-depth inquiry to understand “what [could] be learned” from a context-dependent case and to consider further inquiry (Yin, 2014, p. 189). This single, *instrumental* case study provides an illustration of how one program responded to an important issue (Stake, 1995) and may provide information for educators in similar contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) format to write the case report by (a) presenting the problem; (b) using thick description to describe the context and the issues observed in the context; (c) providing a discussion of important findings; and (e) describing the outcomes.

My case study is aligned to a symbolic interactionist perspective. Herbert Blumer (1969) explains symbolic interactionism as the construction and interpretation of meaning resulting from interactions between individuals and themselves and individuals and others in a sociocultural context (Crotty, 2013). My work is situated from a symbolic interactionist perspective which enabled me the opportunity to provide a qualitative analysis of teacher educator agency regarding their perspectives and actions in response to the enactment of a high-stakes assessment in teacher preparation. I conducted data analyses from a symbolic interactionist perspective, using an inductive approach via naturalistic inquiry, to interpret program participants’ responses to the state mandate. I employed the constant-comparative method to analyze individual interviews, email responses, and multiple documents (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I conducted document analyses looking at the purpose/function and the content of each document (Prior, 2003).

Definitions

Teacher Performance Assessment. A performance-based assessment of teacher readiness to teach based upon “application of subject-specific pedagogical knowledge that research finds to be associated with successful teaching” (Pechione & Chung, 2006, p. 23).

Teacher Quality. Teacher quality is defined by a teacher’s verbal ability and content knowledge measured on content exams as indicated in *No Child Left Behind, Act of 2001* (U. S. Department of Education, 2002). Teacher quality for the purposes of certification also considers the teacher’s knowledge, skills, and dispositions as related to the certification field (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Newton, 2010).

Teacher Effectiveness. Teacher effectiveness is measured by student outcomes based on student achievement scores on standardized tests and tied to the student’s teacher as indicated in the *Race to The Top Executive Summary of 2009* (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Newton, 2010; U. S. Department of Education, 2009). Teacher effectiveness is not entirely under the control of the teacher, as it is problematic in isolating other influences (e.g. poverty, lack of healthcare and school resources) that may contribute to student learning (Newton, 2010).

Certification (licensing or credentialing). Certification is defined as the “process by which states assess the qualifications of individuals to teach” (Wilson & Youngs, 2005, p. 593).

Accreditation. Accreditation is the “process by which an institution (college or university) convinces the public and other institutions of its [‘programs’] soundness and rigor” (Wilson & Youngs 2005, p. 593).

Perception. “A result of perceiving : observation”; “a mental image : concept”; “quick, acute, and intuitive cognition : appreciation”; “a capacity for comprehension” (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Online Dictionary, 2017).

Action. “The accomplishment of a thing usually over a period of time, in stages, or with the possibility of repetition” (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Online Dictionary, 2017).

The following chapter will focus on a review of the literature on teacher performance assessments.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Teacher performance assessments (TPAs) are linked to teacher effectiveness, as related to student achievement, and are beginning to show some connection to value-added measures, also used to measure teacher effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009; Newton, 2010). As a result, some teacher educators have advocated for TPAs as drivers for professionalizing the teaching force, while policy makers in some states have responded to public concerns about teacher quality and effectiveness by requiring the use of TPAs for certification, program approval, program completion, and/or professional license upgrade (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009; Newton, 2010). For the purpose of this study, I conducted a review of the literature to examine how teacher educators and their programs have responded to policy mandates requiring a high-stakes assessment for teacher credentialing. As mandates influence change (Hall & Hord, 2015), the review of the literature on teacher performance assessments provided me with an understanding of how program leaders and teacher educators across the country responded to mandates which had implications for their teacher candidates and their programs.

I reviewed the literature on teacher performance assessments implemented in teacher education programs by searching ERIC and EBSCO databases, Google Scholar, and specific journals, such as *Journal of Teacher Education*, using key words: teacher performance assessment; edTPA; PACT; TPA; performance-based assessments; teacher education assessment; teacher education accountability and reform. Furthermore, I conducted a hand search of hard copies of teacher education journals: *Action in Teacher Education* and *The New Educator*. I narrowed the search to peer-reviewed studies, focusing on teacher performance

assessment in the last decade, from 2006-2016, when TPAs were explored and/or implemented for teacher credentialing. Finally, I identified articles that provided an overview or conceptual understanding of teacher performance assessment implementation processes and outcomes in institutions of higher education to develop a broad understanding of what was happening across the country.

By conducting a review of the literature, I developed an understanding of the TPA movement and the development of TPAs in response to concerns about teacher education. I gained some understanding of program leaders' responses to policy related to how they reconciled their personal beliefs and attitudes and how they engaged and motivated teacher educators in response to the change. I also learned how some teacher educators negotiated philosophical tensions and disturbances that were in conflict with political, intellectual, and demographic influences on the preparation of their teacher candidates in a high-stakes environment. Finally, I was informed of curricular decisions that teacher educators made that may or may not have been beneficial for their programs. Reflecting on the literature, I confirmed and expanded hypotheses as I conducted a study to understand how a program in Georgia responded to a policy mandate requiring edTPA as a consequential assessment used for certification and program completion.

In this chapter, I begin by addressing the teacher performance assessment movement and the adoption of TPAs across the nation. First, I provide an overview of the development of TPAs in California, leading to a description of the design of the first nationally available TPA, edTPA, and concluding with a summary of the adoption of TPAs in some other states. Finally, I discuss three main points, with salient examples from the literature, to explain how state policies, requiring a TPA, as a credentialing assessment, have influenced the design and implementation

of this study regarding the (a) engagement of teacher educators in response to policy mandates; (b) teacher candidate learning in a high-stakes environment; and the (c) impact of TPA policies on teacher preparation program curriculum.

The Teacher Performance Assessment Movement

Proponents of the TPA movement have responded to concerns about teacher education accountability and reform in the United States. Public concerns stem from historical, social, and political influences driving the conversation, from issues pertaining to teacher quality to those on teacher effectiveness. Additionally, education stakeholders target teacher capacity as a need to address the educational needs of a growing population of diverse learners who will be able to compete in a global economy (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2014). Much like current reform policies aimed at evaluating P-12 teachers, based on outputs measured by student achievement scores, policy makers have created new standards and have adopted TPAs to evaluate teacher education programs and their teacher candidates. With new evidence tied to teacher education programs, teacher performance, and student growth, proponents of teacher performance assessments believe that the teaching profession will be viewed in higher regard with the adoption of teacher performance assessments, providing valid and reliable evidence for: (a) program improvement, (b) accreditation, (c) state approval of programs, (d) cross-state licensure, (e) teacher induction and mentoring programs, and (f) advanced certification renewals (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Due to external mandates for teacher education reform, teacher educators fear losing program autonomy as the assessment of their programs has shifted from local to state control and even federalization. By receiving federal government grant funds incorporated in law (e.g., *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, *Race to the Top Executive Summary 2009*), states were required

to demonstrate accountability by making the assessment outcomes of their program graduates' effectiveness on P-12 pupil learning transparent to the public. Furthermore, state agencies created their own standards, aligned to national standards, to maintain state control. In addition to reforms requiring an alignment of teacher education programs to new state and national standards, stakeholders in federal and state policy arenas shifted their discussion from a focus on teacher quality, measured by exams evaluating content knowledge and verbal ability, to teacher effectiveness, measured by TPAs assessing pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and pedagogy. Instead of focusing on content knowledge alone, state agencies demanded that teacher education programs ensure that teacher candidates pass multiple exams, giving options in some states for choice between a teacher performance assessment (e.g., CalTPA, PACT, FAST, edTPA, PPAT) and another pedagogy assessment, such as Praxis II, in addition to a content exam.

Considering reports regarding the concerns for the quality of teachers prepared in teacher education (e.g., the Carnegie and Holmes reports) and the subsequent founding of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBTPS) in 1987, teacher educators and policy makers continued an emphasis on the professionalization of the teaching force by developing and refining performance-based assessments (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009). Some policy makers and educators agreed that programs needed immediate feedback on the quality and effectiveness of their candidates before leaving the program, and states needed to protect their students by preparing learner ready teachers (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009; Newton, 2010). Following initiatives at the state level to professionalize teaching, the conversation at the national level continued among some educators and policy makers and

focused on the development of a valid and reliable teacher performance assessment at the national level (Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009; Newton, 2010).

The Development of TPAs in California

In California, as early as 1998 with the passing of SB 2042, legislators required teacher education programs to be aligned to new standards (Chung, 2008; Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009; Hafner & Maxie, 2006). Then, in 2001, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing approved the *Standards of Program Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Preparation Programs* and induction programs, aligning teacher education programs to standards for teachers and for P-12 student learning (Hafner & Maxie, 2006). Rather than relying on paper-pencil tests, which emphasized content knowledge (i.e., multiple choice and open-ended responses), the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing worked with teacher educators and Educational Testing Service (ETS) to create the *California Teacher Performance Assessment* (CalTPA), emphasizing pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009). By July 1, 2008, SB 1209 was approved, and California legislators required teacher preparation program candidates to take a content and a pedagogy exam for teacher credentialing. Colleges and universities were given an option to use the CalTPA or to develop their own TPA (Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009). California universities developed some of the first standardized TPAs which led to the development of nationally available teacher performance assessments. The California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA) (Hafner & Maxie, 2006), the Performance Assessment of California Teachers (PACT) (Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009; Peccheone & Chung 2006;), and the Fresno Assessment of Student Teachers (FAST) (Torgerson, Macy & Beare, 2009) are three state TPA options developed by institutions of higher education in California.

Led by faculty and staff at the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE), the PACT Consortium founded in 2001, comprised of 12 public and private institutions, developed their own TPA, the *Performance Assessment of California Teachers* (PACT), aligned to their program goals and the new standards (Pecheone & Chung, 2006; Pecheone & Chung Wei, 2007). The PACT became the precursor to other state teacher performance assessments and to other TPAs available nationally (e.g., edTPA) (Pecheone & Chung Wei, 2007). The PACT was piloted in 2002 and went through a revision period in 2003-2004. Required by SB 1209 in 2006 it was approved in 2007 by the California Commission for Teacher Credentialing, and statewide policy for TPAs became consequential in 2008. The author and owner of the PACT continues to be the SCALE which has supported its implementation in 33 preparation programs in California. The PACT is a subject-specific pedagogy portfolio covering 17 credential areas and focused on a Teaching Event (TE) (Pecheone & Chung Wei, 2007).

The PACT portfolio is comprised of five components: (1) Planning, (2) Instructing, (3) Assessment of student learning, (4) Reflection, and (5) Academic language. Evaluators use three rubrics per component for scoring. Data from the Teaching Event (TE) is used as one source of evidence for program completion and recommendation for initial state licensure in California. Elementary candidates complete the TE in either literacy or mathematics, and three additional content area tasks (developed by their program) in other core content areas not assessed by the TE: literacy or mathematics, history-social science, and science (Pecheone & Chung Wei). The PACT creators have worked on an additional optional or formative feature called the Embedded Signature Assignments (ESAs). The ESAs were envisioned as campus-specific tasks with rubrics

designed for formalized scoring. Examples of ESAs include community studies, child case study, observation of classroom management, and a curriculum unit (Peccheone & Chung Wei, 2007).

Institutionally trained scorers score the PACT. All PACT Teaching Events are locally scored by trained PACT consortium scorers as part of official scoring and reporting. Considering the reliability in scoring, scorers spend two days training in a subject-specific area of expertise. IHEs/programs send a Lead Trainor or collaborate with one another to score. Scorers who fail to calibrate must be retrained and pass to score. Teaching Events that do not meet the passing standard or that are just above the passing standard (i.e., have at least one score of 1) are double-scored. A random sample of 10% of the remaining TEs are double-scored to check reliability.

Considering the validity of PACT, developers established content validity by identifying a strong linkage between the TE and the California Teaching Performance Expectations and skills determining readiness to practice. Construct validity was established in their comparison of the structure of the guiding question items to the results of a factor analysis. They examined bias and fairness by examining the differences in the scores of different demographic groups. Criterion-related concurrent validity was measured and accomplished by comparing raters' holistic ratings of candidates' performance to their pass/fail rates.

The First Nationally Available TPA: edTPA

After 25 years of developing, implementing, testing, and refining performance-based assessments (e.g., InTASC Standard Portfolios, PACT, the National Board portfolio), the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE), in collaboration with their partners, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), created edTPA, the first nationally available TPA (SCALE, 2016a). With the rise of standardization and reform efforts in teacher education, implementation of edTPA has become a growing trend for

measuring preservice teacher performance and for various purposes (e.g., program completion/graduation, certification, program approval, and/or accreditation).

edTPA is a subject-specific, teacher performance-based assessment created by educators and owned by Stanford University (SCALE, 2016a). SCALE formally launched edTPA in 2013, following two years of field testing with 12,000 candidates across 450 institutions of higher education and 29 states (SCALE, 2016a). After the second year of national implementation, SCALE tested the assessment with 27,000 candidates across 700+ teacher education programs in 38 states (Pechione, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016; SCALE, 2016b). edTPA's structural design incorporates 80% general pedagogy (i.e. planning, teaching, and assessing) and 20% subject-specific pedagogy constructs across 27 content areas aligned to national organization standards, such as the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics and InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and Learning Progressions (Pechione, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016).

Teacher educators designed edTPA to include three subject-specific tasks aimed at student learning and principles from research and theory: 1) planning for instruction and assessment, 2) instructing and engaging students in learning, and 3) assessing students' learning. The edTPA Elementary Education Handbook includes three tasks focused on literacy learning and a fourth task, "Assessing Students' Mathematics Learning." (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2017b, p.43). edTPA emphasizes a 3-5-day cycle of teaching focused on student learning, embedding academic language components and opportunities for teacher candidates to justify their planning decisions, analyze their teaching effectiveness, and use data to inform instruction ((Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2017a). The teacher candidate engages in analytical thinking and reflection in a response to all edTPA tasks including authentic artifacts consisting of lesson plans, student work samples, video-

recorded evidence, and reflective commentaries. Upon completing edTPA, teacher candidates submit all tasks for external scoring. edTPA candidates are provided a flexible submission schedule by Pearson, edTPA's operational partner, to submit their portfolios the first time and during retakes (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2017c).

Based upon several statistical tests assessing interrater reliability, edTPA scorers were shown to be in approximately 95% agreement following the double scoring of 2,617 portfolios (Pechione, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016). Additionally, edTPA sources of validity evidence are consistent with the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (2014)* in measuring a teacher candidate's ability to plan, teach, and assess in subject-specific areas to determine their readiness for the teaching profession (Pechione, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016). There is evidence of predictive validity that edTPA constructs significantly predict first-year teacher performance, as noted in research on a 2013-2014 cohort of graduates from a University of North Carolina institution who were followed into their first year of teaching (Bastian & Lys, 2016; Pechione, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016). VAM scores, based on North Carolina teaching standards, were associated with 7 of 15 edTPA rubrics. Specifically, edTPA's Instruction construct predicted significantly higher teacher ratings on 4 of 5 North Carolina teaching standards, while the Assessment construct predicted significantly higher ratings on 2 of 5 teaching standards (Bastian & Lys, 2016; Pechione, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016). Other supporting evidence of edTPA predictive validity was found by Goldhaber, Cowan, and Theobald (2016) indicating passing scores on edTPA was predictive of candidate employment and their students' achievement in literacy but not mathematics (Pechione, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016).

The development and design of edTPA was intended for educative purposes as embedded in programs where learning is continuous and everyone learns. The assessment is intended to

enhance program improvement and curriculum renewal (Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016). Pecheone and Whittaker (2016) highlight the importance of incorporating formative opportunities for candidates to engage in authentic experiences, using edTPA materials, as well as, teacher educators' use of data from candidates' edTPA score profiles and work samples to identify strengths and needs for program improvement. Although educators are provided support from Stanford Center for Learning and Equity (SCALE) in collaboration with American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) through an online network community, including numerous shared resources, educators mandated to implement the assessment have met challenges from the onset. From conceptually-framed reactions in the field to its consequential use for certification and/or program completion, edTPA has spurred both positive and negative responses from teacher educators, including from the edTPA coordinators and faculty members who have been charged with the facilitation and implementation of edTPA.

The Adoption of TPAs in Other States

Like California, many states now include content knowledge computer-based assessments, such as the PRAXIS or the GACE, the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2014), and a pedagogical content knowledge assessment, such as edTPA, (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity, 2016b) or *The Praxis Performance Assessment of Teachers* (PPAT), a performance assessment developed by ETS in 2015 (Educational Testing Service, 2016).

Tensions have occurred as edTPA has been adopted as a high-stakes assessment in several states. Unlike California, New York began requiring edTPA for licensure on May 1, 2014 with little time for programs to explore, thus causing some resistance among teacher educators (Greenblatt & O'Hara, 2015; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). Some teacher educators have

argued that edTPA is not a performance assessment as it includes only a 20-minute video, a short segment of performance, and demands that candidates have strong reading, writing and technological skills (Greenblatt & O'Hara, 2015). They believe that edTPA privileges certain candidates in field placements, requiring some candidates to address the learning needs of English learners and pupils with disabilities, while not requiring this demand of other candidates in other contexts. Furthermore, they state that faculty are focused on test preparation during student teaching seminars and that candidates experience increased anxiety due to the additional demand of a high-stakes assessment (Greenblatt & O'Hara, 2015).

Resistance in New York has led to teacher educators developing an alternate scoring consortium to address their concerns with edTPA adoption as related to the construction of race and racism (Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). Reported by Tuck and Gorlewski (2016), the project directors, teacher educators from the following institutions engaged in participatory action research: State University of New York at New Paltz, D'Youville College, Teachers College, City University of New York Graduate Center, New York Institute of Technology, Hunter College, and State University of New York at Cortland. The educators used five to ten edTPA portfolios from each institution, applying their alternative scoring tool, and comparing scores to those evaluated by educators trained by Pearson (Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). They argue that any form of standardized testing includes racial, class, and gender bias. Additionally, the educators propose that edTPA sees teaching and learning as *neutral*, *apolitical* or *value free*; however, they believe that knowledge nor teaching is any of the above (Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). Defining teaching and learning based on observable outcomes and evidence provided by candidates in edTPA, they argue, is too restrictive. Furthermore, they believe that outsourcing leads to wealth building of privateers, and external scoring methods do not account for the complexities of

implementation that occur in local contexts that candidates must resolve during the process. Finally, they contend that an alternate tool was not developed to replace the edTPA, but it was used to take a critical stance to ensure that candidates were addressing issues of race, power, and privilege as noted in their field experiences (Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016).

Among other states requiring edTPA for teacher licensure, Illinois and Washington had more time to explore the implementation of the assessment, but teacher educators still reported mixed reviews regarding faculty support of TPAs (Barron, 2015; Dover & Schultz, 2016; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). Barron (2015) describes how one Illinois institution supported edTPA implementation for teacher candidates by creating institutional structures to aid in the transition. She also describes how the assessment has spurred program improvement and has influenced the effectiveness of the teaching of their graduates (Barron, 2015). Dover and Schultz (2016), teacher educators from another Illinois institution, question the rigor and accountability of edTPA as compared to other assessment methods that encompass a larger range of criteria for evaluating candidate readiness to teach. Like Tuck and Gorlewski (2016) they argue that standardized testing narrows the evaluation criteria, increases opportunities for privatization of education, and discounts the local context, especially for candidates who are placed in urban settings where teachers may not have established strong classroom management procedures (Dover & Schultz, 2016). Finally, Meuwissen and Choppin (2015), teacher educators from Washington and New York, have concerns about edTPA from the perspective of teacher candidate learning. Their experiences with edTPA will be addressed in more detail later in this review.

My study addressed the edTPA policy mandate in the state of Georgia and the response of teacher educators from one teacher education program. A review of the literature served as a

base for what has already been learned, and I made comparisons to what I learned from a specific program in Georgia. State agencies (i.e., The Georgia Professional Standards Commission, the Georgia Department of Education, and the University System of Georgia) and institutions of higher education in Georgia, began exploring edTPA in 2011. The state agencies worked closely with teacher educators and P-12 stakeholders through phases of exploration and implementation, solidifying policy in Georgia requiring edTPA as a credentialing assessment fall 2015. Like other states, Georgia policy makers, who aimed to increase the effectiveness of teachers in P-12 public schools, may compare teacher education programs based upon edTPA data. edTPA will have an impact on the number of teachers produced in the state based on the consequence of not certifying candidates who score below the state cut-off score.

Engagement of Teacher Educators in Response to Policy Mandates

Leaders in institutions of higher education are often charged with the responsibility of responding to policy mandates and new initiatives, such as TPA implementation, with little time to prepare. Since programs and structures in higher education are slow to change, research has indicated that administrators face challenges motivating teacher educators (i.e., tenure and non-tenured faculty, university supervisors, P-12 school-based partners) to engage in, rather than to resist, these policies (Peck, Gallici, & Sloan, 2010; Sloan, 2013). Program leaders recognize that it is critical for teacher educators to have opportunities for inquiry and to engage collaboratively, examining teacher candidate learning and ways to adapt the curriculum. Teacher educators share unique program goals and desire to maintain their program's mission and identity, lest they feel a loss of autonomy which furthers their resistance/compliance to new initiatives (Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Ruddell, 2007; Lit & Lotan, 2013; Meuwissen, & Choppin, 2015; Peck, Gallici, & Sloan, 2010; Sloan, 2015). In the section that follows, I review the literature related to (a) teacher

educators' concerns in response to change and (b) teacher educators' approaches when predicated with change.

Teacher Educators' Concerns in Response to Change

Aligned to the notion of identifying educators' concerns and response to new policy mandates, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is a theoretical framework developed to understand educators' stages of concern regarding the adoption of a new innovation and to identify their levels of use, resulting from their acceptance of or resistance to the innovation (Hall, 2010). The beliefs, attitudes, and actions of leaders and educators, as described by Hall and Hord (2015), influence change. The Stages of Concern (SoC), one of three dimensions of the CBAM, is a useful tool in understanding educators' concerns (i.e., beliefs, feelings, and attitudes) as related to the adoption of an innovation, such as edTPA (Hall, 2010; Hall, Dirksen, & George, 2006; Hall, Newlove, George, Rutherford, & Hord, 1991). Additionally, a second dimension of the CBAM, the *Levels of Use* (LoU) concept, acknowledges the *behavioral phenomenon* involved in a change, seeking to identify sets of actions/behaviors that describe an individual's or a group's use of an innovation (Hall, Dirksen, & George, 2006, p. 5). Some leaders and teacher educators respond to mandates by demonstrating actions that promote the acceptance of change, while others exhibit actions that lead to the resistance of change (Hall & Hord, 2015). By understanding that educators progress through a series of stages of concern, in response to policy mandates, teacher preparation program leaders can learn how to engage faculty in professional development to: (a) learn about the innovation (i.e. edTPA), (b) navigate philosophical tensions, (c) manage logistical procedures of implementation, (d) collaborate with one another to analyze data and make meaningful program decisions, (e) support teacher

candidates, and (f) consider alternate ways of responding (Many, et al., 2016; Qian, Fayne, & Lieman, in press).

Teacher Educators' Approaches in Response to Change: Inquiry, Compliance, and Resistance

Prior research in the form of both self-studies and case studies has focused on teacher educators' inquiry or compliance approach in response to the implementation of teacher performance assessments. Findings indicate that teacher educators' local knowledge in developing their program curriculum must be valued and permitted, rather than standardized (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). Teaching is not technical, but rather it is a complex act, requiring teacher judgement and contextualized decision making in a moment (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Delandshere & Petrosky, 2004). Consequently, teacher educators must heed caution when thinking about the effects of standardization on teaching and learning. While research scholars have found that teacher educators understand that standardization in the form of assessment, and even discourse, may help to provide a common language regarding practice, findings underscore teacher educators' recognition that standardization narrows how they think about teaching and learning and devalues their beliefs and purposes of education (Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Ruddell, 2007; Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). Some educational scholars contend that leaders in higher education must come to understand how they are influenced by policy mandates and the conditions for developing an inquiry stance to learn and change (Dewey, 1938, Peck, Galluci, & Sloan, 2010; Peck & McDonald, 2013; Whittaker & Nelson, 2013). Since change is related to the process of learning (Hall & Hord, 2015), and learning is both an individual and socially constructed endeavor (Vygotsky, 1978); then, it behooves administrators and teacher educators to capitalize on opportunities to create *communities of practice* (Lave &

Wenger, 1991) and *cultures of inquiry* where learning can take place (Sloan, 2013, p. 33; Whittaker & Nelson, 2013). I will offer examples of three empirical research studies which highlight leadership and faculty perspectives in response to change via inquiry or compliance and resistance, resulting in different outcomes. In the development of my study, I considered the findings from these studies informative in understanding various ways that faculty may respond to change.

Data Analysis Supporting an Inquiry Stance. Peck and McDonald (2013), researchers from the University of Washington, conducted a multi-case study selecting three programs from 32 California institutions, focusing on one large public university and two research-intensive universities in California that implemented PACT and used the data for program improvement. They highlighted the importance of leader and teacher educator engagement in review of teacher candidate data as the key to developing an inquiry stance. The study took place, in collaborations between University of Washington, Stanford University program leaders, the PACT Consortium, and program leaders to understand how California programs were using PACT data (Peck & McDonald, 2013). Researchers conducted the study in three phases: (a) phase one - interviews were analyzed to look for context and process factors; (b) phase two – program policies and practices in using data were examined; and, (c) phase three – case summaries were written, followed by a cross-case analysis (Peck & McDonald, 2013). Informed by this work, the researchers developed the Elementary Literacy PACT (Peck & McDonald, 2013).

Peck and McDonald's (2013) findings from case one at San Jose State University revealed that teacher educators viewed the assessment as a means for learning and for program improvement, not for accountability which would result in a loss of control. By deconstructing how candidates performed on each rubric, teacher educators could see similarities and

differences across samples which led to curriculum change supporting teacher candidate analytical writing, the incorporation of academic language assignments, and embedded classroom management skills. Leaders created committees to engage faculty in data analysis in a review of a random sample of portfolios that all teacher educators locally scored. In this way faculty became involved in the decision-making regarding curriculum change (Peck & McDonald, 2013).

From case two, at University of California, Davis, a suburban research-intensive institution, findings from elementary and secondary certification and master's program faculty indicated that they found the original ETS CalTPA design, prior to PACT, to be inefficient in interpreting domain scores and in providing a holistic view of candidates, making it difficult to develop interventions for program improvement (Peck & McDonald, 2013). Engaged in the inquiry process, program leaders became involved in collaboration with other teacher educators to analyze exemplar cases and to become involved in developing the PACT. They found that their candidates struggled with assessment and academic language. Because they engaged in inquiry together, faculty felt they could maintain their program values and identity to create interventions designed specifically for their program (Peck & McDonald, 2013).

Finally, teacher educators at University of California, Santa Barbara were not involved in the PACT design, only its revisions (Peck & McDonald, 2013). UC Santa Barbara, a research-intensive institution had success during the implementation process; however, their faculty were the most resistant due to assumptions that they held regarding what candidates were learning in their courses, as compared to PACT results. Consequently, they felt some loss of autonomy (Peck & McDonald, 2013; Sloan, 2013). By participating in scorer training and data analysis retreats, faculty reported becoming more knowledgeable about courses outside their own, and

they increased their knowledge and PCK in new ways (e.g. instructional strategies to support learners with disabilities) to support their candidates (Peck & McDonald, 2013). This study had implications for engaging faculty in scorer training and data analysis to enhance their own content and pedagogical knowledge, specifically in addressing how to support students with disabilities.

The California case studies had implications for my study as each institutional context, inclusive of programs in elementary and secondary education, responded to an external mandate by learning about the state developed TPA, the CalTPA; by navigating philosophical differences; by collaborating to use data and make meaningful decisions; and by responding to create an alternative TPA, the PACT (Whittaker & Nelson, 2013). They described stages of concern, such as the *personal stage*, showing some philosophical resistance, prior to experiencing the *collaboration stage* where they engaged in cultures of inquiry to understand data (Hall, Newlove, George, Rutherford, & Hord, 1991). Unlike institutions and/or programs in other states, California scholars had the opportunity to respond with an alternative assessment, embracing their autonomy to design and analyze an assessment that they developed for their programs. In this dissertation, I aimed to understand how teacher educators responded to a state mandate, and what they learned, when there was not an option for them to create an alternate assessment.

Critiquing the California studies, I have identified some limitations that were not identified by the researchers regarding credibility and dependability, respectively: (a) the depth and scope of the study or prolonged engagement, and (b) the description of methods for data collection and data analyses. Because the researchers aligned evidence from the interview transcriptions to the dates (i.e., June and October, 2008) that the interviews were conducted, I inferred that the study took place during at least a summer and fall term. The quotes provided

helped me visualize the educators' beliefs and actions as related to PACT data use; however, methods for data analyses of interview transcriptions and/or document reviews were not discussed in detail. Researchers indicated that data were examined in three phases and case studies were written and followed by cross-case analysis; however, this does not provide enough explanation (Peck & McDonald, 2013). In conducting my study, I provided a case study protocol and thoroughly describe the data sources, data collection procedures and management, and methods for data analyses to ensure for trustworthiness. Additionally, I described potential limitations, such as prolonged engagement.

Distributive Leadership Supporting Cultures of Inquiry. In Sloan's (2013) qualitative, case self-study, at University of California, Santa Barbara, she explained how *distributive leadership* supported a *culture of inquiry* and led to a smooth PACT implementation process, despite some of the initial faculty resistance. Using distributive leadership models to understand organizational change, Sloan (2013) described that with distributive leadership in a program, *key events or contradictions*, such as policy change, local scoring, and data analysis, create *disturbances* or reactions which lead to productive outcomes (p. 33). Sloan (2013) defined distributive leadership as the combination of *disturbances* and *leadership actions* that *set change in motion*, to create outcomes that then prompt renewal of deeper program practices and solutions for improvement (p. 30). She found that distributive leadership changes in response to the outcomes at UC, Santa Barbara, focused conversations on data, increased discussion of practices, and developed shared interpretations (Sloan, 2013). Using multiple data sources, such as interviews of key informants, participant observation, faculty and student work, and questionnaires of their perceptions, Sloan (2013) highlighted examples of specific leadership actions that were taken at the program level (e.g. spaces for faculty collaboration and work) that

prompted institutional actions (e.g., development of a common lesson plan template and use of data).

Sloan (2013) underscored the importance of leadership in establishing cultures of inquiry, supported by organized structures that promote distributive leadership and faculty engagement, in creating a system of collaboration. In my study, I worked to engage leaders and teacher educators to learn about program and/or institutional leadership, communities of collaboration, and structures of support that may have facilitated a response to the edTPA mandate and the implementation of the high-stakes assessment.

Standardization on Professional Discourse Leading to Compliance. Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, and Ruddell (2007) provide a third and final example of faculty engagement in response to a mandate. They conducted a qualitative, critical discourse self-study, of 10 full-time faculty members at a California university. Their study examined the effect of standardization on their professional discourse, in response to a new standards alignment and TPA policy in California, leading to outcomes of faculty compliance, rather than inquiry. They wondered if they could maintain their program identity, which was learner-centered and promoted progressive ideas and the ethic of care, while trying to respond to a policy mandate. They collected several data sources, including interviews with nine faculty members, California Commission for Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) documents, course syllabi, faculty meeting minutes, and research team discussion minutes (Kornfeld et al., 2007). As participant researchers, they questioned *who and what gave meaning to words*, including “what counted as knowledge in teacher education and whose interests were being represented” (p.10). They found that the impact of the policy changes heightened their awareness of standardization. While the new standards provided a common language for talking about practice, the use of technical, standardized language narrowed faculty

thinking about what they do. Finally, they discovered that by engaging in the process of critical discourse analysis, the process served, for them, to regain control of their discourse, a political act, which diminished their chances of being controlled by the discourse (Kornfeld et al., 2007).

While Kornfeld et al. (2007) explained ways to resist policy mandates, such as finding ways to understand their own discourse in response to a standardized assessment, they did not provide strategies for teacher educators who are required to implement the high-stakes assessment with teacher candidates who are learning and developing as novice teachers. Conducting a self-study, Kornfeld et al. (2007) did not explain resistance and responses to mandates in other contexts. I was interested in learning in my study if educators had resisted the mandate, and if so, how they responded and what could be learned.

In summary, we are reminded that leaders support the collective learning of their faculty by providing organized structures for conversations where social interaction occurs and new meaning is constructed. Program leaders have considerable responsibility in understanding how to respond to policy changes, implementing new standards or teacher performance assessments. They must examine the conditions and processes that promote change and enact the practices that will promote inquiry work leading to program coherence and improvement (Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009; Peck, Galluci, Sloan, 2010; Stillman, et al., 2013). Since these studies provide some evidence of leaders' and teacher educators' responses to change as related to the implementation of TPAs, this information was useful in my study as I examined the processes and conditions that arose in a different context in response to a TPA mandate, such as edTPA. It was important to understand that leaders have different styles in engaging faculty (Hall & Hord, 2015). They have varying levels of understanding of teacher performance assessment and different skill sets in managing the implementation of a new innovation. Leaders

may have multiple roles in an institutional context, such as program coordinator, assessment coordinator, and edTPA coordinator, to name a few. Institutions vary in support structures, depending on administrative support and financial sustainability. Some program structures may include *communities of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991), while in other programs, faculty may work in isolation. Understanding the tensions or disturbances that arise and may lead to a productive response was important in my study as I came to understand the participants' experiences in their context.

Teacher Candidate Learning in a High-stakes Environment

While it is important to consider how leaders and faculty will engage in individual and collective learning for understanding and program change, the literature points to the critical need for teacher educators to consider teacher candidates' learning in a high-stakes environment, while they are completing TPAs for teacher licensure. Teacher educators must consider the inconsistencies in standardized testing for children as for teacher candidates who are also learning and developing as professionals (Caughlin & Jiang, 2014). In previous research, teacher educators addressed theories of learning, such as sociocultural theory, recognizing novices' developmental needs for formative feedback and assessment, as they co-construct knowledge with influential others, in contrast to a TPA summative measure in an high-stakes context (Chung, 2008; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). Margolis and Doring (2013) wondered if a teacher candidate, who was still a novice, could demonstrate mastery on a teacher performance assessment that was originally designed for a veteran obtaining National Board Professional Teacher Certification. Additionally, Chung (2008) supported the notion that it takes time for new teachers to grow and develop, considering Schön's (1983) *reflection in action*, and the role of the teacher as a *reflective practitioner*, described by Shulman (1987).

Viewing the teacher as a professional, rather than a technician, teacher educators recognize that learning is contextualized, and teachers must reflect in action and make impromptu decisions at any given moment to meet their learners' needs. Teaching is complex and requires that teachers have knowledge of child and adolescent development; understanding of their learners' interests, and cultural, linguistic, family, community and socioeconomic backgrounds; deep content knowledge and understanding of the subject matter; pedagogical content knowledge and skills; general pedagogical knowledge; and professional knowledge (e.g., learning theory, sociocultural perspectives) (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). In the sections which follow, I review specific areas of the literature related to the needs of teacher candidates as they are faced with edTPA including (a) recognizing developmental needs for formative feedback, (b) considering tensions related to supports, agency, and representation, (c) recognizing stress as a factor related to standardized testing, and (d) using TPA data to understand patterns in learning and to inform supports.

Recognizing Developmental Needs for Formative Feedback

Teacher educators considered the importance of sociocultural learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which suggests that the learner's zone of proximal development is the range in which a learner may move from his current skill level to the desired level with the support of a highly skilled professional. This view suggests that teacher candidates need instructional guidance and supports as they develop within a program. In contrast, states utilizing TPAs as a high-stakes assessment must adhere to stringent policies describing the kinds of support that are acceptable, during TPA implementation occurring at the program endpoint (SCALE, 2014). Thus, research has found that teacher educators reported feeling hesitant in how to guide and support their candidates for fear of breaking the rules (Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). Based on their findings

of teacher educators' perspectives on providing candidate support for the edTPA, based on SCALE's (2014) "Guidelines for Acceptable Candidate Support," Ratner and Kolman (2016) categorized teacher educators as *breakers*, *benders*, or *obeyers*. They suggested that teacher educators either broke the rules, due to their philosophical stance; they bended the rules, providing some unacceptable supports and explaining support of the candidate's development; or they followed the rules to be compliant (Ratner & Kolman, 2016).

Considering Tensions Related to Supports, Agency, and Representation

In addition, teacher educators considered the context for learning important, while considering TPA implementation (Chung, 2008, Margolis & Doring, 2013; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). Chung (2008) highlighted situated knowledge learning (Bruner, 1996) and social constructivist theory (Gage & Berliner, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991b), recognizing the importance of the co-construction of knowledge and learning in communities of practice. Since schools are places of learning, teacher educators considered the amount of autonomy that teacher candidates will have in their school placements to make curricular decisions and implement a TPA (Chung, 2008; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; Okhremtchouk, et al., 2009).

Considering the conditions for teacher candidate learning and development, while completing a high-stakes TPA, Meuwissen and Choppin (2015) presented findings that indicate that edTPA served as a summative, rather than a formative tool, when used only during student teaching, creating tensions for the candidates. They conducted a mixed-methods study with 24 teacher candidates from New York and Washington states revealing several tensions related to *supports*, *agency*, and *representation* reported by candidates in interview data. Regarding tensions associated with *supports*, teacher candidates used social networking with one another to interpret the test criteria and to navigate the procedures for edTPA implementation. Since they

felt that teacher educators were limited in the amount of guidance and support that they could provide, the candidates managed their needs through a social outlet. Candidates also reported concern over their *representation* of their teaching practice, and all its complexities, in short video clips, lesson plans, student work samples, and commentaries. For example, candidates indicated that the relationships that they had developed with children and their teachable moments may not have been captured in their documentation. Even so, 16 of 24 teacher candidates agreed that the central tenants of the edTPA, planning for instruction, engaging in deep knowledge of their content area, assessing the needs of diverse learners, and providing feedback and analysis of learning, were primary factors needed for teaching. They mediated the tensions by using language from edTPA rubrics to describe their practices which required strategic and analytical writing. Finally, candidates reported tensions with their *agency* regarding the contexts where they were placed to implement edTPA. Candidates reported issues with video-recording; with receiving parental permissions; and with decision-making as aligned to school pacing timelines, decisions which proved to be challenging (Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015).

Recognizing Stress as a Factor Related to Standardized Testing

Okhremtchouk, Newell, and Rosa (2013) conducted a two-year mixed methods study on teacher candidates' perspectives on the PACT. Of the 134 candidates enrolled across six different programs on a University of California campus, the researchers purposively selected two secondary English and Social Science cohorts with 20 out of 36 or 56% final participants (Okhremtchouk, et al., 2013). They administered two questionnaire surveys, two years in a row. The first survey was administered, prior to completing the PACT, to identify their skills using the PACT rubric. The second survey, almost identical to the first, was administered following the

completion of PACT. The second survey also included an open-ended response to learn of candidates' perspectives on supports and on one beneficial component of the PACT. Their approach to data analysis included a multi-step coding process to analyze the qualitative responses, which included "individual rater review and interpretation of the participants' responses" as well as group review. Additionally, they followed with "quantitative categorization and analysis;" although, due to the size of the study, they relied more heavily on the qualitative data (Okehremtchouk, et al., 2013, p. 9). I questioned their explanation regarding the use of qualitative data more heavily and learned that their "Sequential Exploratory Design" does permit the researcher to give priority or weighting to quantitative or qualitative data collection and analysis (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006; Okehremtchouk, et al., 2013, p. 9). I found that their method of data analysis, using grounded theory, and their inclusion of thick description of student responses in the results section leaned toward a naturalistic inquiry. The additional use of multiple graphs and narrative, summarizing survey data, in the results section was conducive to a mixed-methods study research design.

Their findings indicated that candidates displayed a gap in their self-confidence as compared to their PACT scores, specifically in academic language (Okhremtchouk, et al., 2013). Candidates also reported stress related to lesson planning and classroom management. They felt that the PACT diminished their time to prepare for other student teaching activities. Additionally, they did not have time to meet with their cooperating teacher or to devote to university coursework that they were still taking, while student teaching (Okhremtchouk, Newell, & Rosa, 2013). Despite these drawbacks, teacher candidates reported that they learned from their PACT lessons, specifically on how to differentiate instruction, use assessment strategies to improve student learning, and reflect on teaching effectiveness, following the

viewing of their video-recorded teaching (Okhremtchouk, et al., 2013). As supports, candidates requested models or exemplars of PACT to increase their depth of understanding (Okhremtchouk, et al., 2013).

Teacher educators may consider the implications regarding the stress and anxiety that candidates experience in high-stakes testing situations and the effect on their self-efficacy. Additionally, Ledwell and Oyler (2016) point out that although curriculum is likely to change when teacher performance assessments are high-stakes, it is likely to occur at the expense of an educative experience. Others would agree, and they wonder if teacher performance assessments can support teacher candidate development, while evaluating them at the same time (Lit & Lotan, 2013; Margolis & Doring, 2013). In my study, I sought to understand teacher educators' perspectives regarding edTPA as an educative assessment, as related to their observations of teacher candidate development and behaviors.

Using TPA Data to Understand Patterns in Learning to Inform Supports

Teacher educators who consider learning theory, recognize conditions that support or inhibit teacher candidates' growth and development (Chung, 2008, Margolis & Doring, 2013; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). Research scholars found that when teacher educators engage in processes of inquiry to examine their candidates' learning, they may discover patterns in learning that may inform curriculum change. Findings from these studies have implications for my study as I sought to learn from teacher educators about their views on teacher candidate learning in a high-stakes environment. I wanted to know if teacher educators found edTPA to be educative and if they developed shared understandings and found ways to embed it in their program, giving their candidates opportunities to practice in authentic ways. I conducted my inquiry to see if the teacher educators considered ways to monitor and assess teacher candidate progress through

means of formative assessments, prior to candidate engagement in the high-stakes summative assessment during student teaching. I also sought to learn from teacher educators about the kinds of evidence that they used to assess their teacher candidates' learning, during and as a result of TPA implementation. The following studies highlight ways that teacher educators have analyzed teacher candidate TPA work samples to analyze specific kinds of evidence of teacher candidate learning, to provide further candidate support and program improvement: Bunch, Aguirre, and Tellez, 2009 and van Es and Conroy, 2009.

Focusing on the Elementary Mathematics PACT, Bunch, Aguirre, and Tellez (2009) conducted a multi-case study of eight teacher candidates' PACT work samples, representing a range of scores, selected from a larger pool of 36 California Teaching Events (i.e., PACTs completed in mathematics) across 2004 – 2006 consecutive academic years. After an in-depth qualitative analysis, they reduced the pool to eight samples, choosing those representing the classes with the highest percentage of English learners and Latino students (Bunch et al., 2009). They conducted document analyses searching for the word, academic language, and they coded looking for themes. Two additional researchers followed the same process and were involved in refining codes and discussing results. Then, they conducted a third phase of textual analysis, for more in-depth understanding of the candidates' responses. They found that their candidates would benefit in learning strategies to develop academic language use in mathematics, which was not free of language, in order to use multiple representations effectively to ensure for learners' content understandings. Additionally, candidates needed support in using mathematics vocabulary more effectively, as well as instructional supports for language demands around discourse in mathematics. Finally, teacher educators noted instances of deficit thinking in their candidates' views of their learners, and they found candidates needed tools to support the

engagement of learners' use of their native languages and ways to connect to community knowledge (Bunch et al., 2009).

This study had implications for teacher educators and for my study regarding the importance of developing and embedding new course assignments and opportunities for candidates to practice throughout the program rather than using methods for teaching to the test at the endpoint. I engaged program leaders and teacher educators in conversation and in a review of recommended program documents to learn about new course assignments embedded throughout the program. Furthermore, I inquired about their review of teacher candidate work and their use of data to see what they learned and what steps they took as a result.

In a second example, Van Es and Conroy (2009) offered additional evidence that teacher educators are engaged in opportunities to assess their candidates' learning as aligned to their program goals. Van Es and Conroy conducted a multi-case study, purposively selecting four teacher candidates' PACT mathematics work samples, two high and two low, from a pool of mathematics PACT Teaching Events from a California university, during the 2006-2007 year. Following the release of a report, *Adding it Up: Helping Children Learn Mathematics* (2001), created to address concern regarding poor performance of U. S. students in math, the researchers were interested in learning if their candidates were able to teach for mathematics understanding as based upon their PACT Teaching Events (Van Es & Conroy). They collected data from two sources and analyzed: (1) analytic memos and (2) video recordings to study the candidates' enacted practice. Van Es' and Conroy's data analysis included the use of document analyses, capturing candidates' thinking regarding the type of mathematics task, their use of learning tools, and their ways of engaging their learners. Their analysis was also informed by a framework on *teacher noticing* which set criteria for what teachers learn from what they observe, while

teaching (Van Es & Conroy). The researchers found that in order to understand their teacher candidates' thinking about their pupils' conceptions and misconceptions in mathematics, teacher candidates needed tools to learn how to increase instructional scaffolding, to notice and reflect on practices, to develop understanding of how their pupils make sense of the mathematics, and to engage their pupils in mathematics discourse (Van Es & Conroy). Additionally, teacher candidates needed support in describing trends or patterns that they noticed in their pupils' learning, as well as, opportunities to learn how to become analytical writers (Van Es & Conroy).

Having access to data, as these examples provide, teacher educators are informed as to how they can adjust their teaching to adapt to the needs of their teacher candidates, ultimately making changes that are educative and useful to embed in the program, prior to the endpoint when TPAs are completed. Providing instructional supports and formative assessments early in the program, teacher educators are more likely to support their candidates' growth and development, as teaching professionals, as well as their self-efficacy. Additionally, if teacher educators embed formative assessments in the program, they may help teacher candidates avoid *metacognitive overload*, suggesting that candidates think about their practice after the fact just to complete the written work required of a TPA (Duckor, Castellano, Tellez, Wihardini, & Wilson, 2014). Understanding the importance of using TPA data to provide educative experiences for teacher candidates in support of their growth and development, these studies provide some evidence of this process. This study had implications for my study as I was sensitive to teacher educators' responses as related to the degree to which edTPA had served as an educative shaper of their teacher candidates' experiences. Additionally, a review of documents was useful in identifying program changes, in program design, course assignments, field experiences, and

student teaching activities that supported teacher candidate development and program improvement.

Impact of Teacher Performance Assessment Policies on Curriculum

As state and federal mandates for program approval and accreditation are requiring that teacher education programs align to state and national teaching standards, P-12 Common Core Standards, and teacher performance assessments, teacher educators continue to wonder if increased standardization will result in the narrowing of teacher education curriculums, covering breadth rather than depth, regarding what a teacher should know and be prepared to do to teach all learners. TPAs are criticized for not supporting culturally-responsive instruction, multicultural education, and social justice education, and for narrowing the curriculum (Dover & Schultz, 2016; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). Additionally, Tuck and Gorlewski (2016) indicated that teacher performance assessments, such as edTPA, do not address issues of race, socioeconomic class, and gender, and instead they assume a color-blind ideology. In the sections which follow, I explore related literature to understand ways faculty have used TPAs (a) to consider an alternate response to learn more, (b) to prepare candidates for teaching in diverse classrooms, and (c) to employ a decentralized approach to examine use as gatekeeper, curriculum change agent, and/or instructional tool.

Considering an Alternate Response to Learn More

Stillman, et al. (2013) provided an example of how teacher educators used teacher performance data to change the curriculum in new ways, noting that the TPAs cannot cover it all. Stillman et al. (2013), understanding that TPAs do not adequately address all the complexities of teaching, facilitated a multi-case study across three California university programs and five teacher candidates to assess a TPA's role, specifically PACT, in capturing teacher candidates'

knowledge and skills to enact culturally response instruction, described as *contextualizing* teaching and learning (Stillman et al., p. 140). In analyzing the candidates PACT responses, they used a matrix model to identify patterns in their candidates' learning across a continuum to uncover teacher candidates' *ideology clarity* and *pedagogical clarity*. *Ideology clarity* is defined as the idea that the teacher is the one responsible for contextualizing practice for the learner. *Pedagogical clarity* is related to the teacher's practice, demonstrated by making learner connections and by valuing learner assets, to facilitate learning of academically challenging content (Stillman, et al.). They found that teacher candidates had shallow understandings of prior knowledge, tapping into academic knowledge and missing learners' *funds of knowledge* (Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005); that is, they neglected students' lived experiences (Stillman et al.). Teacher candidates also tended to make assumptions about their pupils' interests based on stereotypes and their own biases regarding race and ethnicity (Stillman et al.).

This study has implications for teacher educators who aim to analyze assessment data to understand teacher candidate learning, providing new ways for them to engage in practices that support curriculum change for program improvement, going beyond what TPAs can do. Learning from Stillman et al.'s (2013) alternate response, the creation of their own matrix, I recognize that this may be one way that teacher educators have used TPA data to understand teacher candidate learning outside the criteria identified in the rubrics.

Preparing Candidates for Teaching in Diverse Classrooms

Findings from four additional studies provided evidence that the TPA had some benefits in preparing teacher candidates to teach a diverse population of learners; however, these benefits did not encompass the many facets of multicultural education (Bunch, Aguirre, & Tellez, 2009; Lui & Milman, 2013; Torgerson, Macy, Beare, & Tanner, 2009; Van Es & Conroy, 2009). Lui

and Milman (2013) conducted a case study of a yearlong graduate, single-subject secondary program during its first year of implementation, analyzing the benefits and challenges of the PACT as teacher educators incorporated multicultural education in their curriculum. The site was purposefully selected as a graduate, secondary program, from a large, public NCATE accredited university that had provided faculty professional development on multicultural education. Additionally, faculty were conveniently selected to participate based upon the program director's recommendation pertaining to courses they taught and their potential interest. Participants included nine instructors, who taught seven courses, 160 graduate students and 90 undergraduate students who were observed, approximately 130 hours, across seven courses. Researchers narrowed the cohort to 20 as many more observations were conducted on this group of 20. Seven participants from this group of 20 were selected for interviews based upon their "availability" and "heterogeneity," as well as one program director and eight instructors for a total of 16 (Lui & Milman, 2013, p. 128). The researchers conducted, transcribed, coded, and analyzed interview data from the 16 participants. Additionally, Lui and Milman collected and analyzed documents in the form of field notes, course assignments and PACT candidate work. The purposeful selection criteria of the participants in this study were not clearly explained. As a result, I am left to infer that the chosen participants were selected out of convenience; therefore, they may not have contributed the depth of information needed to fully understand the benefits and challenges of the PACT in regard to infusion of multicultural education in this particular context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Despite my concerns pertaining to the trustworthiness of this study, I will consider the findings presented in the study. The researchers shared findings on the positive benefits of the TPA stating that, as a result, the program infused multicultural education in the curriculum, as

candidates were required to write lesson plans considering the class context by embedding academic language instruction to reach English learners and by connecting to students' cultural, linguistic, and developmental learning needs and interests. Lui and Milman also indicated that the TPA did not help teacher candidates reflect on their own personal biases and attitudes, something that it does not address. However, they indicated that some instructors filled in this gap by creating opportunities for candidates to reflect on their beliefs and attitudes in professional learning community discussions and assignments. Additionally, Liu and Milman indicated that an instructor reported dropping curriculum (i.e., a course in examining the purposes of education) to complete TPA assignments.

The Torgerson, Macy, Beare, and Tanner (2009) study, on the FAST teacher performance assessment, provided additional evidence regarding how candidates met the needs of individuals and groups of students. When teacher educators analyzed specific rubric scores across the program, these data served as useful information for educators in targeting specific learning outcomes and in designing teacher preparation program changes. Furthermore, the van Es and Conroy (2009) study uncovered how teacher educators understood their candidates' teaching for pupil conceptual understanding in mathematics and mathematical reasoning and problem solving. They found that their candidates needed to learn how to use instructional supports to engage all of their learners in mathematics discourse. Bunch, Aguirre, and Tellez (2009) provided a similar finding. They provided evidence of the value of examining candidates' PACT portfolios for understanding of candidates' knowledge and performance in teaching English learners in mathematics. They highlighted candidates' instructional needs regarding their understanding of academic language and how to support pupils' use of the academic language.

Employing a Decentralized Approach

Finally, we learn that Ledwell and Oyler (2016) employed a decentralized approach at a private Teacher's College in New York to engage faculty in the new edTPA policy mandate, permitting faculty across 12 programs to create their own pathways to examine if edTPA served as (a) a gatekeeper to profession entry; (b) a curriculum change agent; and/or (c) an instructional tool. Their qualitative study employed iterative rounds of data analysis, coding interview transcripts from 19 teacher educators across 12 programs. Additionally, they created weighted formulas to categorize the curriculum changes across three levels. Ledwell's and Oyler's findings revealed that edTPA did not serve as a gatekeeper, since gatekeeping occurred early in program, sometimes in the form of counseling candidates out, before taking edTPA. Although in some cases the curriculum was unchanged, findings indicated that edTPA did serve as a curriculum change agent at two levels: (a) course curriculum revised; such as, increased instruction on planning sequenced lessons, and (b) course curriculum created; such as, new student teaching evaluations, new edTPA aligned assessments, and new emphasis on planning for differentiated instruction and assessment of ELLs, IEPs, and 504s. Some faculty expressed concern that their programs had been *marginalized*, as edTPA took priority over learning other pedagogical skills and was not aligned to *Universal Design for Learning* principles, but rather focused on differentiation only. Some other faculty saw edTPA as an instructional tool. When edTPA was used in educative ways, described as formative, faculty reported that it assisted their candidates with practices (i.e., planning, teaching, assessing, and reflecting cycle) already deemed important in the program. Teacher candidates' responses regarding implementation indicated that they had difficulty teaching in the moment and making corrections as needed. Additionally, candidates were not in favor of having to follow many directions in to complete the assessment in the

correct format for scoring. Finally, Ledwell and Oyler reported that they did not see a relationship between the level of curriculum change and the program's level of resistance regarding the assessment; although, they found it surprising that faculty with the highest levels of curriculum change gave up program assignments that were important to them.

This study, as well as the others, had implications for my study as I investigated the processes and conditions that teacher educators employ when considering curriculum changes aligned with program goals, such as but not limited to the following: (a) inclusiveness of multicultural education and social justice aims; (b) teacher candidates' needs based on TPA data analyses; (c) use of formative assessment methods within the program for teacher candidate development; and (d) methods to ensure sustainability of curriculum changes over time. I sought to understand teacher educators' perspectives in response to the mandate by questioning how they embedded edTPA in their program and by including an analysis of documents to verify curriculum changes. I considered this review of the literature on teacher educators' responses to a consequential mandate, as related to their engagement in response to the mandate, their perspectives on the learning and the development of teacher candidates in a high-stakes environment, and the impact of the assessment on the curriculum in their programs. Finally, I was open to the issues prevalent in these studies as well as new hypotheses that developed as a result of my inquiry in a new context.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of my case study was to examine a bachelor's degree program leading to initial teacher certification in early childhood and elementary education in Georgia to explore the teacher educators' response to a state mandate requiring the use of edTPA for teacher credentialing. In an era of teacher preparation accountability, I sought to examine teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA and their subsequent actions as they integrated the high-stakes assessment in their program, while preparing their novice teacher candidates for the profession. I used a naturalistic inquiry approach for this study and posed the guiding research question: "How did teacher educators (i.e., administrators, coordinators, department chairs, faculty/course instructors, university supervisors) from one elementary education teacher preparation program respond to a state mandate requiring teacher candidates to pass a teacher performance assessment (i.e., edTPA) for teacher certification?" My sub-questions included: "(a) How did educators perceive edTPA? (b) How did educators act in response to the edTPA mandate?"

Stake (1995) describes four characteristics to define case study research. First, case study is *holistic*, as qualitative researchers aim to understand the whole of their inquiry. In this case, I defined the whole as the program, examining educators' response to a policy mandate. Second, case study is *empirical*, as the researcher relies on information gained from observations and from informants' sharing their experiences in naturalistic settings. Third, case study is *interpretive*, based on human interactions and interpretations in the construction of knowledge. Finally, case study is *empathetic* or responsive to the informants' perspectives (Stake, 1995). Additionally, qualitative studies afford the reader the opportunity to make their own judgements and to consider their subjectivities (Stake, 1995).

Bounded by program context, time, and phenomenon, this study was well suited for case study method. Case study method is appropriate for examining contemporary phenomenon, aiming to understand what can be learned about a problem or issue, such as a state mandate that requires a response from program educators (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). In this case study, educators were faced with a state-mandated policy requiring the consequential use of edTPA for certification with little time to obtain knowledge and understanding of the assessment content and use or to prepare for implementation with their teacher candidates. Employing case study, I uncovered the “how” and the “why” behind the results with in-depth inquiry to understand “what [could] be learned” from a context-dependent case and to consider further inquiry (Yin, 2014, p. 189). This single, *instrumental* case study provides an illustration of how one program responded to an important issue (Stake, 1995) and may provide information to educators in similar contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) format to write the case report by (a) presenting the problem; (b) using thick description to describe the context and the issues observed in the context; (c) providing a discussion of important findings; and (e) describing the outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

Symbolic interactionism is a theoretical perspective grounded in the paradigm of interpretivism and aligned to the epistemology constructionism. Symbolic interactionism is embedded in constructionism, a view that knowledge is constructed in a social and cultural context rather than assumed as absolute truth residing in things without the consciousness of human beings (Crotty, 2013). Although this critical lens was initially maintained by American pragmatists Charles Sanders Pierce, William James, and John Dewey, it declined in the latter half of the twentieth century until its revival in the 1970s (Crotty, 2013). Pragmatists or symbolic

interactionists saw the world as “peaceable” and “growthful” in community, human interactions and experiences (Crotty, 2013, p. 63). In contrast, critical theorists viewed the world as a place of “oppression” and in need of “liberation” (Crotty, 2013, p. 153). Symbolic interactionism, then, became a product of interpretivism concerned with understanding and interpretation rather than emancipation, and it is rooted in the thought of Max Weber, Wilhem Dilthey, George Herbert Mead, and Herbert Blumer (Crotty, 2013).

For this study, I relied on explanations of Herbert Blumer’s (1969) symbolic interactionism as my construction and interpretation of meaning resulted from my interactions as an individual with myself, my interactions with others and myself, their interactions with themselves, and their interactions with others in their sociocultural context. Since my work was situated from a symbolic interactionist perspective, I had the opportunity to provide a qualitative analysis of teacher educators’ perceptions of edTPA and their subsequent actions leading to substantial programmatic changes in their response to the state mandate. Viewing knowledge construction through the process of inquiry in social interactions rather than via scientific methods of investigation, I found the point of view of a symbolic interactionist beneficial in this study (Teo & Osborne, 2011). Through this recursive process, I gained new meaning and deeper insight of the issues confronting teacher educators within their high-stakes context.

Coming from a symbolic interactionist perspective, I examined “the influence of meanings, or the symbolic significances of people’s experiences” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 4) to address a problem. For example, I explained teacher educators’ responses of resistance, compliance, and/or inquiry in their social context in response to the edTPA mandate (Kornfeld et al., 2007; Peck, et al., 2010). Meaning making resided within the symbolic interactions of the teacher educator participants who were trying to make sense of the new policy, its implementation, and its

implications for their programs. The process of inquiry as a social construct is aligned with Blumer's (1969) ideas on the social construction of knowledge: meaning is constructed due to symbolic interactions that occur in group lived experiences. In this study, I inquired about teacher educators' collaborative efforts during the edTPA implementation process to learn about their practices both individually and collectively. I learned how they developed an understanding of the assessment and sought to understand the benefits, the constraints, and the implications for their novice preservice teachers and for their program.

Berger and Luckman (1966) explain that faculty who act out of compliance to new policy, rather than become participants, respond because of coercion and institutionalization. Furthermore, faculty compliance may result in resistance and passive behaviors as was noted in my study and previous literature (Kornfeld, et al, 2007). Additionally, edTPA coordinators may face opportunities and challenges during edTPA implementation as they consider teacher educators' concerns about a new mandate and attempt to find ways to engage them in productive interactions (Many et al., 2016). The symbolic interactionist is not critical and does not aim to emancipate; instead, the symbolic interactionist tries to uncover what is going on from the view of the participants. As a participant observer, I gained understanding of the reality of the participants in my study as they responded to the state mandate (Bogdan, 1973).

Purposeful Selection of Program and Participants

Since case studies are bounded within an individual context, I selected a university-based elementary education program of inquiry for this study and provided an in-depth analysis of the program as the unit of analysis to understand its response to the mandate (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). I purposefully selected the program meeting the following criteria for this case context: (a) a traditional university-based bachelor's program in early childhood education leading to

initial certification (PreK-5); (b) a top producer of elementary teachers in Georgia, excluding my own program; (c) a stable group of educators (i.e., limited turnover) in order to gain information regarding their experiences with edTPA implementation in their program up to this point; (d) one serving an ethnically, racially, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse population of preservice teachers; and, (e) a willingness to participate in this *instrumental* case study (Stake, 1995) to provide information on the phenomenon under investigation.

Furthermore, I employed purposeful sampling of the participants in this case to provide applicable information to educators for making judgements as they implement edTPA in other high-stakes contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As such, I selected eight willing participants by interacting with a first informant who identified additional informants. Subsequent participants continued to identify new participants (e.g., administrators, teacher educators/course instructors, coordinators, department chairs, university supervisors, and staff). Additionally, I used a recursive process of analyzing interview and document data for continuous decision making for purposeful selection of participants in an *emergent design* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Recognizing the need to gain information from a multitude of program stakeholders, I considered program leaders and teacher educators and their levels of involvement and knowledge of edTPA. I recognized that teacher educators had overlapping roles as some of the participants were both course instructors and administrators or coordinators with additional leadership responsibilities, while others played a single role. At the request of the institution that I ensure anonymity, I was not able to disaggregate the results by role, nor was I able to describe each participant. Instead, I aggregated the data to provide a holistic description of the program's response to the mandate, which ultimately satisfied the aim of my study.

Context

Education stakeholders representing the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC), teacher educators and school system personnel, including the edTPA Policy and Implementation Advisory Committee, adopted edTPA in Georgia for initial teacher certification in 2015. The state mandate followed three years of stakeholders' review of some programs' exploration of edTPA from 2011-2014 and full implementation of edTPA in 2014-2015, the non-consequential year. Beginning fall semester 2015, policy makers required teacher candidates to post passing scores on edTPA, the national, externally scored teacher performance assessment, for initial teacher certification. According to the state's plans for assessing teacher education program effectiveness, programs may be compared based on the percentage of graduates who pass edTPA, the key assessment. Beginning in 2018-2019, the GaPSC will evaluate teacher initial preparation programs using metrics called *The Preparation Program Evaluation Measures* (PPEMs), inclusive of the edTPA, for the purpose of measuring teacher-candidate performance while in the program and into their first year of teaching (GaPSC, 2017). Thus, Georgia institutions were faced with the need to ensure that teacher educators understood the new assessment, the policy, and its implications for their teacher candidates and their programs. The GaPSC provided statewide events for teacher educators' professional learning and funded four regional university edTPA coordinators to assist teacher preparation providers during the implementation phase leading up to the consequential year.

The program I selected to examine in this study is one of the top five producers of elementary education teacher candidates in Georgia who are required to pass the edTPA in Elementary Education. The bachelor's program is large, graduating approximately 150 – 170

candidates annually at StateU. The Department of Early Childhood and Secondary Education, inclusive of the program, is comprised of approximately 20 faculty including half who teach in the program. Additionally, the Department of Literacy and Special Education provides service to the program in literacy education. Based on interactions with informants, I learned that three faculty from this department teach in the program. The Department of Early Childhood and Secondary Education offers three programs in Early Childhood Education: B.S. Ed., M. Ed., and Ed. S. The bachelor's program leads to certification in Early Childhood Education, pre-kindergarten to fifth grade. Additionally, the department offers a non-degree certification program in Early Childhood Education.

Participants

As promised in the teacher educators' consent for participation, I have not provided a detailed description of the roles of each participant so as to protect their anonymity and that of the institution. In total, I contacted 19 people who worked at StateU in departments supporting the Early Childhood Education program during the exploratory year and the first two consequential years of the edTPA, 2014-2017. Seventeen of the contacts were females, while two contacts were males. Eight of the contacts were faculty from the Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education. Five contacts were university supervisors from the Department of Early Childhood Education. Three contacts were faculty from the Department of Literacy and Special Education. Two contacts were college administrators, while one additional contact was the program's regional edTPA Coordinator. I have provided, as follows, the criteria I used to select the elementary education teacher preparation program and the procedures for purposefully selecting the eight participants who willingly gave consent to participate in my

study. Four of the eight participants had overlapping roles (i.e., program leaders, course instructors, coordinators, and/or college administrators).

Data Sources and Collection

To respond to the research question, I created a case study protocol (see Table 1), which included the data sources that I used in a recursive process, informed by informants' recommendations and subsequent data analysis, to provide evidence in addressing the question. Yin (2014) explains that in case study research, the researcher should consider establishing a case study protocol by aligning the research question(s) to the data sources. Data sources should be aligned to the embedded units of analysis to create a chain of evidence that is easily retrieved and is stored in a case study database (Yin, 2014). I used the following data sources: (1) individual interviews that were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and (2) multiple program documents across three years, 2014-2017. Program members identified the following important documents for my review: course syllabi assignments and rubrics, program workshop edTPA signature assignments, vision and mission statement, Google Doc assignments, program wiki documents, school partnership PowerPoint presentations, and program edTPA assessment reports. I retrieved on the StateU website the programs of study, the annual assessment report, and a mathematics course syllabus for which faculty were considering a curriculum change.

As follows, I have included my case study protocol in Table 1 and an illustration in Figure 1 of my data collection process using a snowball, recursive approach to invite participants to the study and to follow-up to gain additional information from them based upon my data analyses. Since programs are typically embedded in departments, I began by contacting educators in leadership roles to begin the recursive process of data collection. With each new contact, the participants recommended other informants leading to additional participation and

follow-up. Finally, I provided a description of each data source and my data collection and data management procedures.

Table 1

Case Study Protocol

Case Study Protocol	
Unit of analysis: The teacher preparation program Research Question: How did program leaders and teacher educators, from one elementary teacher preparation program, respond to a state-mandate requiring edTPA as a credentialing assessment?	
Embedded Units - Informants	Data Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial informants: program leaders such as the department chair, edTPA coordinator, program coordinator, or associate dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual interview transcripts Follow-up interview transcripts Email follow-up responses Multiple documents – programs of study, annual assessment reports, course syllabi assignments and rubrics, vision and mission statement, program workshop edTPA signature assignments, Google Doc assignments, wiki documents, and school partnership presentations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional informants invited using a recursive process: teacher educators' such as faculty/course instructors and/or university supervisors, assessment coordinator, and instructional technology faculty and staff 	

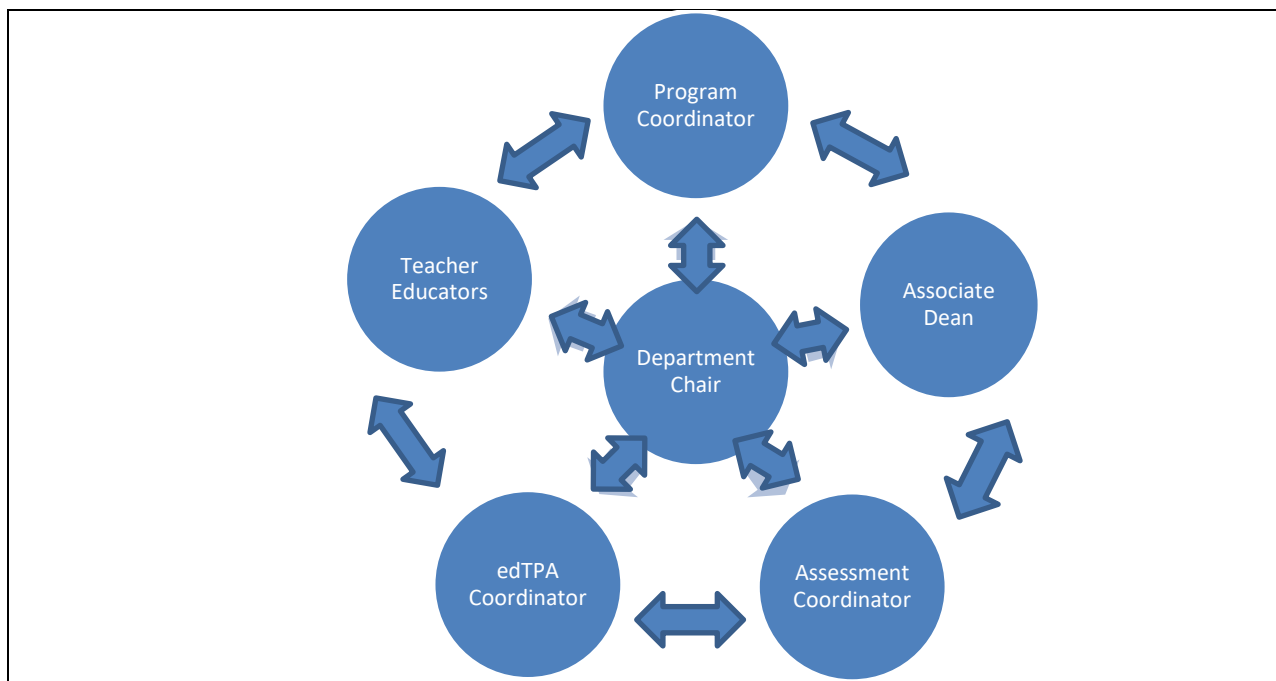


Figure 1. Data Collection Process Using a Recursive, Snowball Approach

Procedures

Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Research Board (IRB) at my own institution in January 2017, I submitted and received approval of two amendments. The first amendment approved by the IRB followed the receipt from StateU's IRB stating that they were not engaged in research and approved of the study. The second amendment approved by the IRB followed receipt of a letter from StateU granting site approval for me to interview participants and to collect documents on site. I received final approval to begin the study on January 27, 2017. Following approval, I sent email invitations to the following participants from StateU's early childhood education program: coordinators, department chairs, teacher educators, administrators, field experience staff, and university supervisors. Members who were willing to participate were given a consent form explaining their commitment time which required approximately 2 hours over a five-month period, January – May 2017. They were informed that follow-ups would occur in May and June and member checks would occur on-going, including a

final member check of the results in July and/or August 2017. I followed these procedures as indicated.

All eight participants spent approximately 40 minutes to one hour of time in one face-to-face interview with me. Two of these participants spent an additional 15-25 minutes of time in follow-up interviews. I audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim all 10 interviews. Three of the eight participants responded to email follow-up questions, and four of the eight participants contributed to my requests for multiple documents. I retrieved five additional documents on StateU's website. I sent final transcripts to each participant for review. Each participant approved the transcripts. Some educators provided modifications to the transcript for clarification. I began the primary interviews in February and completed them in April. I completed follow-up interviews and follow-up emails with clarifying questions in May and June. The total time commitment for each participant did not exceed 2 hours as indicated in their consent for participation. I facilitated all the interviews at a location of each participant's choosing, suitable for recording, and for protecting confidentiality.

I assured participants that I would not identify the institution, the program, or the participants in any way. I assigned a pseudonym, StateU, to the participating institution, and all participants were assigned a numerical code, such as Interviewee 1. As described earlier, I did not disaggregate data by educator role or beyond due to participants' strong desire for anonymity. Additionally, in the selection of quotes in the results, I carefully selected each quote and provided a member check to ensure confidence of anonymity for each participant.

Interviews

Yin (2014) describes interviews as the most important or primary data source for case study research. According to Yin (2014), the interviews should be conducted in a manner that the

researcher engages in conversation with the participants. Following Institutional Research Board approval on January 27, 2017 from my institution and the one where I conducted my study, I began inviting participants in February 2017. I conducted semi-structured interviews, during the spring 2017 semester. I facilitated follow-up interviews and email contacts to gain additional information from the participants who I had learned would have the knowledge to provide the information. I conducted individual interviews with eight educators, four of which assumed overlapping roles and responsibilities, to provide an in-depth examination of their response to the mandate requiring the use of edTPA as a consequential assessment in teacher preparation for certification. Using a recursive approach, I began by interviewing a teacher educator who served in overlapping roles. Upon completing the interview, I asked the program leader to identify other informants who might provide important perspectives based upon their experience with edTPA in the exploration and consequential years of implementation. As I developed a working list of participants to invite to the study, I added to the list based upon recommendations from each participant that I interviewed and based upon my on-going data analysis.

Semi-structured interviews and follow-up emails. I conducted semi-structured face-to-face interviews with program leaders and recommended teacher educators and other stakeholders lasting approximately 45-60 minutes. The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to ask open-ended questions, to gain information from the participants' regarding their perceptions of edTPA based upon their personal and professional experiences and their subsequent actions in response. Following each interview, I asked all informants to identify program documents for analysis that would be useful in helping me understand the program context and the stakeholders' response to the mandate.

I used the Interview Protocol (see Appendix A) to begin the semi-structured interview process with program leaders. As new informants were recommended by initial informants, I revised the interview protocol based upon findings of the data analysis to include additional and/or clarifying questions to fill in the gaps where I lacked full understanding or where I desired more information. For example, I asked new informants questions elaborating on specific course assignments (e.g., case studies, the lesson learning segment, and the video-recorded practice opportunities) and inquired about supports for candidates (e.g., the lesson plan template). I was careful when using the interview protocol so that I did not ask leading questions. I aimed to ensure that participants felt comfortable sharing their responses and rich details regarding their perceptions of edTPA and subsequent actions. I audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim all interviews.

Using the findings from my data analysis from the first round of interviews, I conducted a second semi-structured follow-up interview with two participants who could provide the additional information. I conducted these shorter, 15-30-minute interviews via phone at the request of the two participants. Furthermore, as I analyzed the data and formed working hypotheses, I found the need to ask additional follow-up clarifying questions to gather understanding of key findings from three participants. In these instances, I emailed participants the questions and they provided a response via email.

Documents

I reviewed multiple program documents (see Appendix H – Document Review), using the following criteria in the my selection of texts: (a) elicited texts (i.e., written documents produced by participants, such as edTPA course assignments and rubrics, program workshop assignments, annual program assessment reports); and (b) extant texts (i.e., those already

produced/revised, such as the programs of study, the vision and mission statement, course syllabi) (Yin, 2014). In addition to relevant documents that I found on StateU's website, I reviewed any documents recommended by the participants. I sought to compare documents produced in the 2014-2015 exploratory year of edTPA implementation to documents created in the 2015-2017 academic, consequential years of edTPA implementation when candidates were required to post passing scores on the assessment for certification. In my review of the documents, I looked for the purpose or function of each document and the content of each document to determine how the information contributed to my interpretation of other data collected and analyzed (Prior, 2003).

Data Management

Yin (2014) highlights the importance of case study data management in order to maintain an audit trail and to account for a large amount of data as often characteristic of case study research. I managed data storage on a password protected computer where files, such as audio-recordings, transcriptions, documents, and analytic memos were kept electronically in computer generated folders. Additionally, I created an EXCEL dissertation database to store analyses of all interviews, document reviews, and analytic memos. Finally, I kept a researcher's reflexive notebook to track the timeline, the schedule, the actual implementation of activities, my personal reflections, and field notes. I used an additional EXCEL data management file to track my involvement in data collection as the researcher (i.e., Appendix B) and the participants' involvement throughout the study (i.e., Appendix C). I used email, phone, and person-to-person methods to work with the participants. All electronic email notifications were stored in folders on a secure, protected email system. I used numerical codes to protect the identity of the

participants. I stored the file of participant references safely on my password protected computer. I protected paper copies of documents and my reflexive notebook in a locked office cabinet.

Data Analysis

I conducted an inductive inquiry, generating descriptive findings using constant comparative analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Rather than focusing on methods of prediction and control as used in scientific inquiries, researchers who conduct case study research, using naturalistic inquiry, understand that control is limited and that conditions may change during the inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2014). By conducting a naturalistic inquiry, grounded theories are explained as *pattern theories* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using a “pattern model [of explanation],” the researcher is able to explore more than one phenomenon and then compare their similarities and differences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 49). Additionally, the researcher must recognize that as new patterns arise in the data, the model changes, and the iterative process continues until data saturation is accomplished (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Employing the constant comparative method for data analysis, an inductive, recursive process, the first interview and subsequent analysis shaped the resulting data collection and data analysis process (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By listening to the recordings and by rereading the transcriptions multiple times, I became very familiar with the data, looping back and forth to make sense of the ideas. Interpreting one data source at a time, using open coding and categorizing, I used persistent observation to identify salient themes, until reaching data saturation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I will describe in greater detail, in each section as follows, my involvement in data analysis.

Interview Analyses

Using the constant comparative method to analyze the interview transcriptions, I engaged in the process by identifying a unit of analysis as a thought unit of text (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I entered the thought units from each interview transcription into the EXCEL database, one at a time in the second column, numbering each unit with the corresponding interview in the first column to the left. Next, I used open coding, analyzing each thought unit by reading line by line, to create initial codes in the second column. I used “in vivo” codes, as much as possible, using action words to capture participants’ language, in order to stay close to the data and to their interpretations (Charmaz, 2006, p. 55). I searched for patterns that explained the multiple realities of the participants’ experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I looked for semantic relationships between the initial codes, comparing the patterns and creating sub-categories. By bringing a large amount of data back into a coherent whole, I noted the sub-categories in the fourth column (Charmaz, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I analyzed the sub-categories for comparisons and collapsed them into axial codes, or larger category codes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Using the constant comparative method, I looked for new patterns as possibilities for expanding existing trends found in the literature (Goetz & LeCompte, 1981). I sorted the larger category codes across the entire data set. Coding across the entire data set, I sought to understand and interpret the holistic case, the teacher preparation program, from the descriptive findings accounted for by the teacher educators, the informants in this case study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I am aware of Yin’s (2014) warning to researchers regarding the possibility of losing sight of the overall unit analysis in a single case study with embedded units. I have included the coding chart (Appendix D) and coding trees (Appendix E) to illustrate my coding process.

Document Analyses

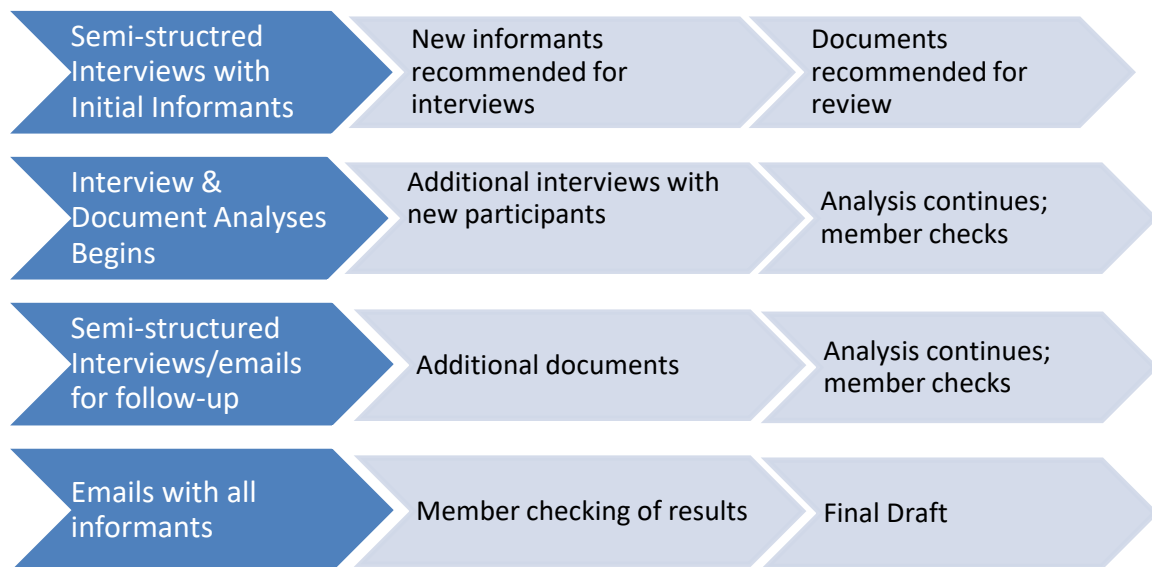
Finally, I conducted document analyses, based upon informants' recommendations and my own retrieval of some documents on StateU's website. I considered two selection criteria, useful in recognizing the purpose of function of each document as I conducted the review: (a) elicited texts (i.e., written documents produced by participants, such as edTPA course assignments and rubrics, program workshop assignments, annual program assessment reports); and (b) extant texts (i.e., those already produced/revised, such as the programs of study, the vision and mission statement, course syllabi) (Yin, 2014). My interpretive theoretical perspective, symbolic interactionism, aligns to document analysis as a method in that it is useful in generating meaning based primarily upon the function of the documents as created by program faculty. Informing my document analyses, Prior (2003) cites Mead (1934) by indicating that meaning is not found only in people's thoughts; rather it is produced "through human action" in "social activities" (p. 111). Thus, to understand the teacher educators' interpretations of the text found in the documents, I focused on identifying the function of each document, or the purpose for the activities described in the documents, prior to conducting a content analysis (Prior, 2003). By understanding the purpose and the content of each document, I constructed an interpretation of the texts. Upon a review of the documents, I found that the elicited texts consisted of course assignments, course rubrics, program workshop assignments, and assessment reports. These were used primarily to document strategies for improving teacher candidate performance and to document use of data for program improvement. The extant text documents, such as the programs of study, the vision and mission statement, and the course syllabi, were modified primarily to show program alignment and to portray a cohesive program aligned to edTPA. By understanding the documents' functions, I interpreted how the documents were used and for what purpose (Prior,

2003). As a teacher educator, myself, I understand that it is important for me to recognize my own subjectivities in identifying the functions of each of the documents. I brought my own experience and interpretation in the analysis. Documents serve as receptacles of knowledge and may attempt to solve a problem, such as, how to develop a new course assignment related to a mandated assessment in order to create an educative experience for teacher candidates (Prior, 2003). Often, the problem is defined within the document identifying key ideas. Finally, specific solutions are suggested, as evidenced by specific key ideas emphasized in the documents.

After thinking about the function of the documents, I conducted an analysis of the content in each document. For the document analyses, I identified units of thoughts from the text in each document and created open codes in the margins (Prior, 2003). I looked for similar patterns in the codes and categorized them into sub-categories and then into larger, main categories. Then, I analyzed the codes to see how they compared to the key ideas that the program leaders and teacher educators identified in their responses to the state mandate to implement the edTPA, required for teacher licensure, as noted during interviews. The Document Review Coding Process is found in Appendix F. For example, the content found in the elicited texts was aligned to the edTPA constructs supporting teacher candidate learning of how to plan for instruction and assessment, engage and instruct students in learning, assess student learning, and reflect on teaching and learning. Additionally, the documents included strategies for implementing the edTPA with candidates. Furthermore, documents included assessment results and goals for improving candidate performance in specific areas aligned to edTPA. Finally, teacher educators' extant texts included edTPA terminology in the modified vision and mission statement and course syllabi assignment descriptions. Information that I gained from document analyses led to further semi-structured interviews and follow-up emails with participants to clarify, question, or

seek additional information until I reached understanding of all document changes. I ensured that participants were given an opportunity, by member checking, to clarify, edit, revise, add to, or delete information as noted on the final document transcript. Please refer to Figure 2 (i.e., Persistent Observation Cycle) for data collection and data analyses processes, illustrating a cycle of persistent observation.

Figure 2. Persistent Observation Cycle



The findings from this case will confirm, alter, or expand what is already known on the issue, serving for others as an *instrumental* (Stake, 1995) case study of worth where a response to a mandate is required of a teacher preparation program. According to Stake (1995), the researcher and the participants contribute multiple views that add to the description and interpretation of the holistic case.

Expectations and Researcher' Role

I serve multiple roles at a large, urban southeastern university as follows: (a) teacher educator/clinical instructor, (b) undergraduate program coordinator in Early Childhood and Elementary Education (ECEE); (c) assessment and edTPA coordinator in ECEE; and (d) more

recently, the Associate to the Dean for Clinical Practice/edTPA coordinator working across colleges with all initial teacher preparation programs. Additionally, I serve as a higher education representative on a state team, the edTPA Policy & Implementation Committee, where I interact with people who are coming to understand the teacher performance assessment and its impact on programs, just as I am. Additionally, I am a white, middle class, middle-aged, female, a similar profile to most teachers in the U. S. (Ball & Tyson, 2011). Currently, I hold a Specialist Degree in Education, and I am in pursuit of a Doctorate in Teaching and Learning with a concentration in Teaching and Teacher Education. With prior PreK-12 teaching experience, I was certified in Early Childhood Education, pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, with additional endorsements: Instructional Supervision and Teacher Support Specialist. I understand the value of certification as a person acquires eligibility for teaching positions in public and private school settings. My positionality in this study, as an emic/insider and as an etic/outsider, both come with its benefits and challenges. I will share my subjectivities as associated with my (1) roles, (2) interests, and (3) beliefs.

I recognized that my overlapping roles - policy committee member, teacher educator, program coordinator, assessment and edTPA coordinator, and former teacher - may have been beneficial in the rapport that I established with the participants who have similar roles and understanding of the issues. I also recognized that when participants learned that the study was a single case and became concerned, an unanticipated factor occurred and provided some limitations in how I was able to present the results (Johnson-Bailey, 2004). To alleviate participants' concerns, I provided an extra measure of assurance reminding them of how I would protect their anonymity. I shared the study application with those requesting it, and I reassured

them that I would aggregate the data, rather than disaggregate the data by their role.

Additionally, I reminded them that I would use numerical codes.

As program coordinator and edTPA coordinator, I work closely with faculty to create and implement innovative courses/curricula based upon candidate performance and the mission and vision of the programs. Furthermore, as a policy committee member I serve the teacher education community by advocating for teacher/PreK-12 education, pushing back or supporting policy mandates. I share information regarding policy and its potential impact on teacher education programs with university faculty where I work and at state and national conferences. I recognize that my position and status on specific policy mandates, such as edTPA, and my current roles may have influenced the responses/perspectives of the people involved in this study.

Additionally, the people who were more informed due to their membership on the policy committee or as a result of their attendance at edTPA conferences brought perspectives inclusive of their interactions and group discussions of the policy issues. I had hoped to include participants varying in role and inclusive of a range of knowledge, understanding, and involvement with edTPA, and this was the outcome. As a result, I gained an understanding of faculty responses to the mandate from multiple points of view.

Coming from an etic perspective, I understood that I am not a member of the institution or of the program of interest in my study, and I brought a researcher's outside interpretation. Additionally, I am aware that I come from an emic perspective, recognizing that this study was not only an extension of my knowledge and interests but also captured the ideas of the program participants (Johnson-Bailey, 2004). While I may have had overlapping concerns with people in this study, differences may have existed, and I may have overlooked them. *Bracketing* interests and experiences are difficult for a researcher as an interpreter of the data and as a person who

brings assumptions to the analysis (Creswell, 2013, p. 83). By uncovering my subjectivities, I aimed for transparency, introducing my beliefs, roles, and attitudes as influences on my interpretation of the results (Johnson & Bailey, 2004). I am interested in preparing teacher candidates who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach diverse student populations. I agree with Matsko and Hammerness (2014) that while most teacher education programs consider how to prepare candidates to teach in diverse settings, preparation for a particular context, such as urban schools, is critical in preparing candidates for more complex settings. Because this idea aligns with my deep interest in preserving program missions/visions of preparation for urban education, I think deeply about policy and its implications for teacher preparation programs. Advocates for the edTPA, a performance-based rather than computer-based assessment, argue that it is an authentic, valid and reliable way, to assess candidate readiness for teaching and may be used for program renewal (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Wei & Pechione, 2010). On the other hand, opponents are concerned with standardization, teaching to the test, and the potential missed opportunities to focus on approaches valued in programs, such as, preparing candidates to teach in diverse urban settings (Sato, 2014). I was eager to construct a deeper understanding of teacher educators' perspectives, decisions, and implications for teacher education as a result of the state policy.

Finally, I hold certain beliefs that may or may not be shared with some of the people in the study: (1) I believe that teaching is complex and requires much time for candidate growth and development in relationship with others – peers, instructors, supervisors, cooperating teachers, administrators, parents, and pupils, to name a few; and, (2) I value teacher preparation with a social justice mission. I believe in Blumer's (1969) premise that it is through our interactions with one another and with ourselves that we construct new meaning that furthers our

understanding. Furthermore, considering the underlying conception of edTPA in comparison to Paulo Friere's (1970) critical stance on teaching, education is not acquired just to "become full of knowledge and skill;" it is a "form of informed action through praxis" (Sato, 2014, p. 425). For this reason, I believe it is important to understand the teacher educators' perspectives on their roles and responsibilities as they respond to a mandate that will influence their programs.

Although I do not believe in the deregulation of teacher education, I question whether standardization is in the best interest of teacher candidates and the pupils they will serve. I contend we must consider the perspectives of teacher educators regarding their teacher candidates' learning and development during the integration of a high-stakes measure and, we must be aware of the influence of this assessment on teacher candidate preparation and their programs. While I believe edTPA is a strong measure of the central components of teaching (i.e., considering all learners in planning for and in enacting instruction and assessment; analyzing student learning; and reflecting on teaching effectiveness), I recognize that it is one assessment, and one assessment cannot cover all the complexities of teaching and learning. I believe that if it is incorporated within the program in authentic ways, then it may be educative for teacher candidate growth and development. However, I believe that when edTPA is used for high-stakes purposes, there are unintended consequences that must be understood to address the impact on teacher education programs.

We must find the balance between professionalization and deregulation of teacher education, or multicultural education and social justice aims may continue to be unstated or removed from programs (Cochran-Smith, 2003). I believe we must understand how teacher educators learn from the integration of edTPA and make decisions that may impact their learners and the curriculum in various ways. This study served as an investigation of the issues from the

voices of those who are in positions to make decisions about teacher education curricula/programs as a result of policy mandates. While I noted that I brought a subjectivity to the issues addressed in this case study, I worked to understand how my subjectivities shaped my work, and I presented my interpretations transparently with the reader. Additionally, I worked closely with a peer debriefer, checking for my biases. By doing so, I have provided results that will keep my readers informed so that they have the information needed to arrive at their own conclusions (Johnson-Bailey, 2004).

Trustworthiness

I endeavored to convince the audience that the findings of this study are of worth by establishing the trustworthiness of my study. Qualitative researchers establish confidence in the inquiry by adhering to criteria appropriate for naturalistic inquiry, detailing four constructs as follows: (1) *credibility*, (2) *transferability*, (3) *dependability*, and (4) *confirmability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility

For the naturalist to establish *credibility*, the researcher must ensure that the realities constructed by the participants represent their interpretations or constructions of knowledge, rather than demonstrate an absolute truth, described as internal validity, and proposed by realists (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for establishing credibility, I provided an overview of how I addressed the following criteria: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking.

Prolonged engagement. *Prolonged engagement* considers the scope of the inquiry, and in my single case study, I gathered and analyzed participants' responses following one year of their implementation of the Georgia state-mandated policy requiring edTPA for teacher

certification. I collected the data in the spring semester of the second consequential cycle, which was appropriate in regard to the time period of the enacted policy. Meeting with people in the setting of their institution, while interviewing and collecting documents, and calling and emailing as appropriate, I used this time to build trust and relationships with the teacher educators during the inquiry, which means going beyond being present (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Since the scope of this study entailed working with participants across a single semester, this was somewhat of a limitation of this study. Prolonged engagement allows the researcher to gain knowledge and expertise related to the problem and to the context which is beneficial in developing trust of the participants. As a member of the Georgia edTPA Policy and Implementation Advisory Committee, I was privy to the development of the policy. Additionally, I engaged in many professional learning opportunities where I developed knowledge of the assessment, implementation strategies, and challenges or tensions. I served as a presenter at regional and national edTPA conferences. Additionally, I served on a research team where I developed an understanding of edTPA coordinators' stages of concern regarding edTPA implementation. All of these experiences worked to my advantage in establishing trust with the participants in addition to the seventh-month time frame spent with them during data collection, data analyses, and member checking opportunities. Thus, by recognizing teacher educators' concerns regarding the consequences of edTPA candidate outcomes for themselves and their program, I was able to provide extra assurance for participants concerned about anonymity and confidentiality. I used numerical codes and carefully selected quotes, and I sought their approval in the presentation of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Since this study took place at a specific institution within a specific program, I assured participants that I would use a pseudonym for the name of their institution in the report.

Persistent observation. Using *persistent observation* during my on-going data collection and data analysis process, I looked for salient themes or patterns in the data, generating working hypotheses and leading to the next round of data collection and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I became so familiar with the depth of the data that I recognized new findings as they were arising in the data across multiple iterations of listening to audio recordings, reading transcriptions, coding, analyzing sub-categories and larger categories, and looping back multiple times (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I demonstrated persistent observation by creating a recursive cycle (Refer to Table 2). I conducted semi-structured interviews with key participants followed by an analysis of interview transcripts. I gathered recommended documents and conducted document analyses. Based upon my analyses, I conducted additional interviews and continued on-going analysis. Needing additional information, I conducted additional semi-structured interviews and made email contacts to gain additional information. I continued data analyses, requested additional documents, and continued data analyses looking for salient themes until reaching saturation. Finally, I provided opportunities for member checking throughout the process. When I collected enough data, reaching saturation, I closed the data collection and analysis process.

Triangulation. I established *triangulation* by using multiple data sources, by engaging multiple participants, and by meeting regularly with a peer debriefer. By using multiple data sources, I became familiar with findings that appeared in more than one source, confirming data trends. I found information gained from the interviews useful in the document analyses to confirm findings across multiple data sources. As teacher educators indicated during interviews that they made changes to their course assignments and rubrics, I reviewed the documents to confirm/disconfirm the changes. For example, literacy and mathematics course syllabi and

assignment rubrics included a description of a new assignment and new levels of proficiency on a rubric for evaluating candidates' performance in analyzing their learners' work samples in literacy and mathematics across the whole class. This assignment and rubric criteria were not apparent in previous rubrics or course syllabi (Document Review 3a-3d; see Appendix H).

Seeking the responses from multiple participants, checking their responses with each other and with findings found in other data sources, I established credibility of the findings. For example, upon interviewing participants, more than one educator commented on the problems that occurred for faculty when social studies and science instructors disengaged from the edTPA initiative due to the fact that the edTPA focus for elementary education candidates was literacy and mathematics rather than social studies and science. I also found evidence in the documents noting that changes occurred in literacy and mathematics courses rather than the other content area courses.

Finally, I enlisted a peer debriefer with whom I met regularly during each month of the study. I asked the peer debriefer to review the definitions provided in the study for clarity to see if she shared an understanding of my coding system, and to confirm my interpretation of the findings in comparison to the data collected and analyzed. I have provided additional information as follows regarding my interactions with my peer debriefer.

Peer debriefing. I worked with a peer to debrief with me on a regular basis in order to accomplish the following tasks: (a) to check for my unintended biases during the coding and analytic, on-going process; (b) to ensure that I ethically upheld the integrity of the study, (c) to check for methodological consistency, (d) to review my record keeping processes, (e) and to discuss any concerns and/or dilemmas that ensued during the inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, to check for my unintended biases during the coding and analytic, on-going

process, my peer debriefer coded the first interview, and we checked to see if we shared similar interpretations. Upon agreement, the peer debriefer later coded a larger dataset, beginning with 30 entries, inclusive of all four themes. Upon finding some disagreement, I clarified the definitions included in my code book. For example, I added the following phrase, “perceptions of the assessment itself as a valid and reliable measurement tool” for clarity of the first salient theme regarding educators’ perceptions of edTPA as a measure of teaching effectiveness. After coding the next two sets of 30 entries, we shared agreement. Please refer to Appendices D and E for my Coding Chart and Coding Trees, respectively.

To ensure that I ethically upheld the integrity of the study, I asked my peer debriefer to check for methodological consistency and to review my record keeping processes. For example, initially, I asked the peer debriefer to review the IRB approval, the study application, the overview of the study, and data collection procedures. I provided an update on the process for participant selection. I reviewed data collection procedures and processes for interview and document analyses. I shared my dissertation database that included the transcribed interviews and email responses.

Additionally, I shared my Researcher’s Reflexive Notebook (see Appendix G for entry dates) where I documented decisions and rationales for my decisions that pertained to dilemmas that arose in the study. For example, I acknowledged the participants’ concern for anonymity and my need to address it when I said, “I told her that when it was time to send an email reminder that I would reiterate the part about anonymity” (Reflexive Notebook, 3/4/17). It was at this time that I sent the study application and the prospectus to participants requesting additional information about the study. Also included in the notebook, I shared my rationale for not including school partner representatives in the interviews. I wrote in my reflexive notebook the

following entry, providing an explanation for not interviewing the Professional Development School principal, saying,

I decided that I did not need to interview the PDS principal. He really does not fit the criteria for my pool of participants (i.e., teacher educator, faculty member, university supervisor, department chair, edTPA coordinator, leader/course instructor). Cooperating teachers are not included in the pool, either, as I am interested in teacher educators' response to the mandate regarding their program housed within the institution where they work. I feel good about this decision, but I realized that I'm missing university supervisors (Reflexive Notebook, 5/10/17).

Thinking that I was missing an important representative in my study, it was at this point in time that I sought to invite university supervisors. None of the five people who I contacted agreed to participate. I learned from teacher educators during their interviews that university supervisors were not involved with edTPA, because the program insisted that all edTPA supports come from the edTPA coordinator and program faculty.

Member checking. I used the process of member checking with all participants by providing the opportunity for them to review, edit, modify, and approve interview transcripts, the document review, and a draft of the results to ensure for *credibility* of the data interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By using *member checking*, I afforded participants the opportunity to share their interpretations of the data analyses at multiple points in the study. I ensured that the interpretations of the participants' responses to the state-mandated high-stakes measure of their teacher candidates' readiness to teach were credible from their perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2014). They were sent interview transcriptions for review and editing. When modifications were made, I included the revised transcript in the analysis rather than the original one. Two participants modified their transcripts to provide clarity. Then, following analyses, they were given a second opportunity to review the findings as presented in the written report. At that time, three participants sent modifications to quotes that were included in the results in order to

provide clarity. I found that information gained from participants who modified the results was useful in providing clarity of the findings. Finally, I established document authenticity by considering the conditions/reasons for why the documents were produced (Prior, 2003). I shared these findings with the participants and ask them to check my interpretations, revise, and edit as needed. Only one participant asked that I modify the Document Review (see Appendix H), requesting a pseudonym for two of the courses to ensure for anonymity of the institution.

Transferability

Rather than considering threats to external validity or generalizability of a study, as appropriate for studies of a true experimental or quasi-experimental design, qualitative researchers consider two specific criteria for establishing *transferability*, or the extent to which a study can be interpreted and judged by another: (1) purposeful sampling, and (2) thick description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1995). I purposefully selected a program for this study based upon specific criteria identified earlier in this chapter. Using purposeful selection that is *information oriented* makes this a descriptive, *instrumental* case study pertaining to a specific issue (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). By defining the purposes for selection and the specific context for this case study, I provided the reader with an understanding of the institutional and programmatic factors which influenced the results. Secondly, using case study method, I studied a single program, asking participants open-ended questions within a semi-structured interview protocol, to collect detailed accounts of their experiences in response to the state mandate. To address transferability, I provided rich details or thick descriptions by providing results that will enable the reader to make judgments, while visualizing and interpreting the findings. By providing a clear and rich account for an external reviewer, the reviewer may be afforded the opportunity to apply judgments in regard to the findings to similar

high-stakes contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, in protection of institution and participant anonymity, I was unable to fully describe the case study context or disaggregate the data by participant role thus limiting transferability. Instead, I provided a general description of the context and aggregated the data using interviewee numbers to provide an overall program response, the unit of analysis.

Dependability

To ensure for *dependability*, I created a case study database, an EXCEL database, maintaining a *chain of evidence*, which is necessary in case study research so that the reader may trace the findings to the evidence found in the data sources and aligned to the research question (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, I clearly described data collection methods and analytic strategies so that another researcher may repeat this process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The goal in naturalistic inquiry is not to replicate the study but to clearly present the procedures for data collection and the strategies for data analyses so that the process is understood by another (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I stored, managed, and analyzed all data sources in an EXCEL database, creating an *inquiry audit trail*, displaying the analytic strategies that helped to shape the findings (Charmaz, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the database, I created a tab for each interview, follow-up interview and email responses, using numerical codes. I sorted the data in subsequent tabs throughout my on-going analysis to visually see the coding system and the emerging trends in the dataset which informed my working hypotheses. I color coded by theme to identify the quotes that I used in the report.

Confirmability

Naturalistic researchers do not aim for objectivity as noted in positivist paradigms. Instead, in naturalistic studies, the researcher uncovers subjectivities and produces a data trail of

evidence. Additionally, my etic perspective enabled me to be more objective as an outsider of StateU. To further ensure for *confirmability*, I kept a reflexive journal, a paper and electronic resource, to document my thoughts, reflections, the timeline and logistics of events, and the rationales for my decisions throughout the process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I noted my subjectivities in the previous section, and I reflected on my subjectivities and potential biases, in my reflexive journal. For example, concerned about participants who I knew prior to the study, I wrote in the journal, saying,

I also recognize my researcher positionality, having worked with the Interviewee 4 in the past, and I was extra careful to refrain from having conversations with her that might make her feel uncomfortable in her current position at the institution (Reflexive Notebook, 3/4/17).

Additionally, regarding my researcher positionality, I wrote in my journal additional comments, saying,

I am thinking about my subjectivities – researcher positionality today. I found it interesting when Interviewee 7 introduced me to her Assistant Dean as her friend, and oh, as a researcher. He got a chuckle out of it, too. I am very aware that I know several people, due to working relationships in the state, and these people are also participants in the study (i.e., Interviewees 7, 4, and 6).

As I noted earlier in the discussion of my interactions with my peer debriefer, I explained my considerations for dilemmas as they arose and my rationales in the decision-making process. To create a timeline of the logistics of the events, I used my EXCEL database documenting the procedures and subsequent dates. In Appendices B and C, I provided an overview of the researcher's and participants' involvement throughout the study. Additionally, I created an *audit trail* using charts and tables presenting the raw data, the steps throughout the coding process, including coding definitions, data syntheses and reduction strategies, sub-categories and larger categorical themes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In Appendices D and E, I provided the coding chart and definitions and coding trees, respectively. I created analytic memos in my EXCEL

dissertation database and my Researcher's Reflexive Notebook (see Appendix G for entry dates) as part of my analysis, including my process notes in the audit trail (Charmaz, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As I presented the findings, I provided evidence that the findings were supported by actual data, using multiple quotes connected to salient themes that are included in the coding chart and coding trees in Appendices D and E (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Chapter 4

THE ELEMENTARY PLAYGROUND:

A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL PLAYERS

Glancing into the schoolyard, we see young learners running around the playground, moving quickly from one piece of equipment to the next. They are making choices based upon their abilities and desire to attempt new, challenging learning experiences with their peers. We see the swings moving back and forth as groups of children move forward with looks of glee on their faces, and then, they have moved backward in a different direction. On the see-saws children are moving up and down and on and off, occasionally sitting completely still and all alone. Over on the playground system, children are swinging across the bars, climbing up walls, crawling through tunnels and finally sliding to the bottom. Then, we see a few children on the obstacle course running through hoops, jumping over mini-hurdles, falling, and getting back up again, grabbing hold of the ropes, walking carefully across a balance board to the finish, and looking ahead to try it again.

An elementary school playground parallels the context for an elementary education program. The playground is comprised of many kinds of equipment, including swings, see-saws, playground systems, and an obstacle course, each designed for different purposes and chosen by educators to support the growth and development of young learners in an appropriate and satisfying learning environment. Likewise, the elementary teacher-education program, in this case study, was designed to assess and to support the learning of teacher candidates in an environment with opportunities for them to practice teaching, to develop metacognitive strategies, and to construct knowledge with influential others for their own growth and development. While responding to a high-stakes accountability measure, the implementation of a teacher performance assessment for teacher certification, teacher educators aimed to provide a meaningful, developmentally appropriate and equitable education program for their teacher candidates.

In this chapter, I present the findings to understand one teacher-education program's response to a state mandate requiring edTPA as an assessment for teacher licensure. I will use

elementary-school playground metaphors as vignettes and will provide thick description of the corresponding themes related to the teacher-educators' perceptions and actions that resulted in their program's response. Metaphors are useful in "grounding" one's conceptual understanding of concepts, when things of the physical world are used to help explain concepts in the nonphysical world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 59). To develop understanding of patterns of thought occurring sometimes unconsciously, we use metaphor to conceptualize one experience as related to another (Schmitt, 2005). Metaphors can be used, then, in qualitative research to assist the reader in an interpretation of complex yet meaningful text (Schmitt, 2005). Using metaphor as a writing style, researchers assist the reader using figurative language to understand a concrete concept in comparison to an abstract concept to describe the results of a study (Charmaz, 2006). Through the use of playground metaphors, I intend to aid the reader in understanding the complexities of my findings as related to the guiding research question and purpose of the study: "How do teacher educators (i.e. college administrators, program chairs/coordinators/faculty) from one elementary teacher education program respond to a state-mandate requiring edTPA as a credentialing assessment?" Please refer to Table 2 for an overview of the playground metaphors, the players, and an alignment to the salient themes addressed in my study.

Table 2

Playground Metaphor Alignment to Salient Themes

Playground Metaphors	The Players	Salient Themes
The Swing	Children swinging up and swinging back on the swings as analogous to teacher educators' perceptions of the highs and lows of the benefits and limitations of edTPA	Swinging Back and Forth: Teacher Educators' Perceptions of edTPA as a Measure of Teaching Effectiveness
The See-Saw	Children jumping off, dangling their feet in the air, and moving up and down on the see-saws as analogous to teacher educators' level of engagement with edTPA	Finding the Balance on the See-Saw: Understanding What Affects Teacher Educator Engagement with edTPA Implementation
The Playground System	Teachers' selection of a developmentally appropriate playground system as analogous to teacher educators' supports for novices completing edTPA	Supporting the Novice: Perceptions of Novice Teacher Development and Learning with edTPA Expectations
The Obstacle Course	Teachers' design of an obstacle course for pupils as analogous to teacher educators' creation of a challenging teacher preparation pathway for their candidates	The Obstacle Course of Teacher Education Program Reform: Teacher Educators' Actions Resulting in Change

Swinging Back and Forth: Teacher Educators'

Perceptions of edTPA as a Measure of Teaching Effectiveness

Jumping on the swings, children propel their bodies forward heading for the sky, exhilarated by the force that moves them forward in their discovery of motion. Suddenly, they pause for a moment, to react to the change in speed, and jerk their legs backward projecting in the opposite direction. Oh no, what happened? And...they give it another try, only to discover that they are right back where they started. In a back and forth movement, the children keep trying to move ahead even further, but something keeps this from happening.

As a *swing* moves “back and forth” due to the tension experienced by the user exerting force in both directions... consider teacher educators' (i.e. college administrators, program chairs/coordinators/faculty) perceptions of the edTPA as a tool to measure teaching effectiveness

and to determine teacher candidate readiness for the profession. While viewing children swinging back and forth on the playground equipment, visualize the back and forth swinging movement of the teacher educators as they are pulled in different directions, sharing benefits, moving forward in favor of the edTPA and then moving backward to consider its liabilities (see Table 3 for an overview of the salient theme and sub-themes).

Table 3

The Swing Metaphor

Salient Theme	Sub-themes
Swinging Back and Forth: Teacher Educators' Perceptions of edTPA as a Measure of Teaching Effectiveness	<p>The Swing Extends Up: Beneficial Aspects of edTPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuable content • Usefulness as an assessment measure <p>Swinging Back: And Yet There Are Liabilities to edTPA Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability • Fairness • Gatekeeping

The Swing Extends Up: Beneficial Aspects of edTPA

All eight participants in this case study viewed edTPA content (i.e. validity) and its use (i.e., as an authentic, intentional, informative assessment) as a benefit, swinging forward with a positive perception of edTPA as a valuable measurement tool for assessing teacher readiness for the profession.

Valuable content. Several participants spoke of the content of edTPA emphasizing its quality teaching constructs. One participant indicated that it was the strongest program assessment commenting, “Because it has all those components that you can look at to see if they're ready. The planning, the assessment, the actual instruction part, and then being able to tie

it together and reflect on what they've done and being able to justify that based on student needs” (Interviewee 2). Another participant gave a similar response, saying, “Yeah, I don't think anybody would argue that planning, instructing, and assessing are not critical components of good teaching. I think it, effectively, assesses those three components of teaching” (Interviewee 4). Still, a third person replied,

Well, I think it's a broad question. I would describe edTPA as a teaching portfolio initially. In comparison to what we know about teaching portfolios from a long time ago, they were just a collection of artifacts. What I see differently about this teaching portfolio is that it's a collection of teacher candidates' artifacts they have identified for planning, instruction, assessment. What sets it apart—and there are other portfolios like this, but what sets it apart for me is that teacher candidates are able to reflect on their planning, instruction, and assessment practices and decisions. (Interviewee 7)

Supporting edTPA's planning-teaching-assessing-reflecting cycle, participants also indicated that the assessment required critical thinking and analytical writing skills that you would expect of an effective teacher. For instance, an educator replied:

What I have seen has been the biggest impact of it has pushed critical analysis for the [teacher candidates] to really look at what they have done. That is a win-win situation to me. Instead of just teaching a lesson and not reflecting on it, they have to really look and see, “Well, how did that go? What did I do well? What would I change about this? How did it impact the students?” They have to go through and assess it. I think that the critical thinking and the critical analysis has been the biggest and the best impact on the [teacher candidates]. We're seeing them being able to write better about what they have done. (Interviewee 6)

Another educator also commented that the writing component combined with the analysis of the video-recorded lessons was a step up from previous teacher education standardized assessments:

Well, I think it is a better assessment than a multiple-choice Praxis type...Praxis has...well there are teacher certification assessments that have writing components in them. I think it is a better measure of whether a student can teach or not, because it does ask for video, and there are more opportunities for students to write about their instructional decisions and the outcome of their instructional decisions. So, I think it is a superior assessment to some of the previous assessments in that regard. (Interviewee 1)

In support of the reflective and analytical writing component included in the assessment, another participant noted that the teacher candidate can present culminating evidence of learning by the end of the program:

Well, the lesson writing. Can they put together the lessons? The video shows their actual teaching skills, being able to analyze assessments and use that to guide instruction. And, reflective thinking...can they reflect back on what they have done and figure out why they did it? And, if it is research-based, so I think it really makes them pull together everything they've had for two years in the program to be able to showcase that – their knowledge, their understanding. (Interviewee 2)

In addition to critical thinking and analytical writing, this educator emphasized how the analysis of assessments and reflection on teaching based upon evidence tied to research is required of candidates to demonstrate their overall knowledge and understanding at the program endpoint. Stating that the requirements of edTPA are what you would expect a teacher to know and be able to do, yet another participant said,

In general, I think all teachers should consider the things edTPA asks us to consider, and be reflective about our teaching, and look at what are our students learning from our teaching, and where are the gaps still, and how can I follow up with this. I think all of that is very valuable. They should know and be able to do that when they finish. (Interviewee 5)

Finally, another educator noted the intentionality of the assessment in its inclusion of both video and critical analysis constructs as vital aspects of any teacher-education program:

Well, I feel like I like the part that is a video of what you do and then you have to explain it so that I think reviewers see that there is some intentionality in the actions you are taking...so that you know what you are doing and that sort of thing. So, it's more than beyond demonstrating good teaching but there is the thinking process behind it – the planning – knowing what you're looking for and how to remediate and that sort of thing. So, I think that uh, places a greater emphasis on the types of things that [teacher candidates] should know what to do and that we need to incorporate those things in our program. (Interviewee 3)

This participant explained that the video component is yet another piece of evidence for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and to analyze the effectiveness of their teaching tying it back to the evidence.

Usefulness as an assessment measure. Teacher educators also spoke positively on the use of edTPA, as an authentic measure, informing them of their candidates' performance in contexts teaching children and developing as professional teacher leaders. One educator indicated,

I see this as a stepping stone that hopefully will lead to teachers as leaders and maybe some will go on to do national certification. Because, it is very similar, but we need to know what they can do. So, it helps build our program. And, we look and take what they're doing and use it for improvement in our program. (Interviewee 2)

Another educator stated,

What I do like about it is I think it is a very valuable tool for colleges of education and teacher preparation for groups to have—to know which students are—who are doing well, and who are not doing well because it is, like I said, practitioner based. It is like the national board..." (Interviewee 6)

Both educators mentioned national board certification and its ties to edTPA, a valuable tool for colleges of education to identify what their candidates know and can do and a step toward developing teacher leaders.

Regarding the authenticity of the experience, one teacher educator considered the possibility of the teacher candidate practicing lessons beforehand, although she/he recognized the developmentally appropriate opportunity, saying,

I think they, definitely, can and do practice their lessons especially for the video Is that always the case? No, I don't think so. Is it an authentic teaching experience? Yes, it is because they're implementing it with real kids. It has to be developmentally appropriate. We want it to be—that's one of the things we try to emphasize with the cooperating teacher. We want the assigned learning experience to flow naturally within their scope and sequence of their curriculum. (Interviewee 4)

The educator continues her/his comments to explain that the content of the assessment and teacher candidate use of data to inform instruction is appropriate and certainly authentic, saying,

Our issues really haven't been with the assessment itself. It's knowing your students for the context of learning segment, planning appropriate lessons or learning experiences based on knowing the needs of your students, and then assessing in formative and summative ways throughout the teaching process. Then using that data to inform their

instruction. This is good teaching. That's why we're having them in that cycle of planning, assessing, informing, planning, and continuing the cycle. (Interviewee 4)

Another educator alluded to a positive view of edTPA as providing a common lexicon for teacher preparation programs, yet this participant also stated that teacher education programs must get on board or not exist, indicating tension with the assessment:

Well, I guess so. We all have a shared common language now. We all talk about the same tasks. We all – all of the institutions of education, we're kind of together on this. So, I guess in a way, it has brought us all together, at least in a common language. We look at things. I don't know how else you could get around it. If your students aren't passing edTPA, you're not going to be in business long, are you? (Interviewee 3)

While this educator provided a convincing argument that the assessment provides a common language for the profession, she/he also underscored the accountability factor. Teacher education programs are under pressure to present passing scores on candidate performance or perhaps face serious consequences of closing...swinging backward.

Swinging Back: And Yet There Are Liabilities to edTPA Implementation

Just as teacher educators were projecting to heights of favorability on their swings, thoughts regarding reliability, fairness, and gatekeeping related to edTPA use led to their trajectory backward, swinging in a negative direction in their perception of edTPA. Most of the issues that were discussed by teacher educators as liabilities, causing a shift in their view of edTPA as a measure of teaching effectiveness, and were due to their understanding and/or lack of understanding of factors concerning the reliability, the fairness, and the gatekeeping/filter notion of edTPA in determining teacher candidate readiness for the profession.

Concerns about reliability. Five out of eight educators were concerned about how edTPA is scored, emphasizing interrater reliability, adequate training, expertise, and even effort of the people chosen to score. One participant commented, "I guess, a large part of that depends on who's scoring it and what their backgrounds are. From what I understand—I could be

mistaken about this—it's teachers that score them. Is that right? Some of them are, possibly, retired teachers" (Interviewee 5). The same participant elaborated to explain her/his concern about scorer training:

I think with edTPA in measuring effectiveness, well, that depends on who's defining effectiveness and who's defining who's scoring. I don't know. What's your rater inter-reliability, I guess, on these scores? If you score one and I score one—I know I'm sure they get intensive training on how to score 'em using rubrics and things like that, so I suppose if you buy-in to the fact that they're all very well trained and that scorer A and scorer B are gonna give pretty decent scores, then it could be as successful if they're seeing video clips. (Interviewee 5)

This educator wondered about the qualifications of the people who were scoring edTPA as well as interrater reliability in scoring. Another educator shared confusion regarding the process of double-scoring which he/she thought had changed from one semester to the next. While score reports were indicative of double scoring in previous semesters, she/he presented a visual image portraying scoring as completed by one scorer, remarking,

Well, one of the things I—I'll start with the negative. [Laughter]. I'm not really clear on the scoring of the edTPA. I think originally it was supposed to be scored by two national scorers. During the first couple of rounds of scores that were reported, we had several students scoring 0.5's on some rubrics. This led me to believe that they were scored twice and there was a discrepancy, and they took the average. We are not seeing that at all now with our scores, and I've heard that it is only going to one scorer. I'm a little concerned about that. (Interviewee 4)

Assessment scores reflected in Appendix H – Document Review 3t – edTPA Institutional Data Analysis (July 2017) indicate that only one candidate out of 72 was double-scored as noted in the Interviewee 4's comment. While I had access to the total composite scores from the previous year, I was not permitted access to the rubric level scores disaggregated by candidate. Thus, I was not able to provide a comparison to the previous year.

This educator also explained that there had been some program disagreement in scoring outcomes noting the following,

Yes, we were glad for the student, but we didn't feel that the score was a very accurate representation of her overall teaching skills based on our assessment, multiple assessments over the course of the program. That's one thing that I guess I'm most concerned about the scoring process – conducted by Pearson. (Interviewee 4)

The educator shared that the multiple program assessments created by the program teacher educators were more representative of the teacher candidate's overall performance than edTPA.

In this case, the teacher educator believed that the candidate should not have passed edTPA based upon the other multiple measures. Again, questioning that teacher candidates are externally evaluated, another educator expressed concern:

You've got someone who you've watched mature and they just excel...I don't know how often this happens. In XXXX schools, they've been fantastic. And then, their portfolio is scored by somebody from Indiana...nothing wrong with Indiana...I just picked a state. And, they don't pass...they don't get a passing score. I don't know how I would feel about that. (Interviewee 3)

This educator also shared concern about low compensation for scorers and questioned their consistency of effort in scoring:

Oh, one other thing this scoring as well. I know it's not, our faculty have done the training. Some of them have been approved. One thing they all have said is what edTPA or Pearson is willing to pay is not nearly enough, because of how long it takes what is needed to do a really good job. So, how do you know that there are going to be those scorers who put out the amount that they are going to get in what they are paid from edTPA? (Interviewee 3)

Questions about fairness considering school context, content area, and program

type. Concerned about variance in school contexts, lack of choice for candidate selection of a content area for assessment, and differing levels of autonomy dependent upon program type, teacher educators also questioned the fairness of edTPA. School context was a factor for educators who expressed concern about departmentalization where teacher candidates may not be assigned in a school placement in a content area (i.e., literacy or mathematics) specified for the assessment. Additionally, educators were concerned about lack of choice for candidates in

selecting a content area, since elementary education candidates are required to teach literacy and mathematics rather than science or social studies. Furthermore, educators shared concern for their traditional program candidates who are afforded less autonomy in decision-making in their assigned placement, since they are not the instructor of record as are provisional candidates. One educator commented, “I believe some of the fear of edTPA comes from field placement as well. Some of the students do not get to experience all the content areas in placement due to departmentalized grade levels” (Interviewee 2). Additionally, this participant explained her/his concern about the candidates’ lack of choice in content area, saying,

I like the video part. I like them analyzing, but I think having that focus on just a literacy standard and a math standard, there are some that excel in science and they don’t have that ability to show-case that. So, I think it is limited in that it is a literacy task and a math task. (Interviewee 2)

Another educator expressed concern for traditional program candidates who must fit their lessons into a timeframe that meets the need of the teacher’s curriculum pacing for the students. In comparison, provisional candidates, who are hired by districts while they complete certification programs, can select from a range of learning segments that they have completed as teachers of record. The educator remarked, saying,

I know that's true because our provisionally certified students don't have these issues as they are the teacher of record. They're in charge of their curriculum implementation. They're making those decisions. We just don't hear that. They might video for weeks and weeks and then decide on their clips. That's good. I'd like to interview them and see because they may have several experiences they may turn in for their ‘edTPA’ portfolio and then they look back and decide which particular sequence of lessons they will select. To me, that's authentic. That's really what national boards was or is, is the teacher pulls together their portfolio looking at all these experiences, and then they determine say which learning experiences they really wish to showcase as their best teaching. (Interviewee 4)

This individual also mentioned national board certification and the option for candidates to select from a variety of artifacts to demonstrate their teaching competency. In contrast, the

undergraduate traditional program student is confined within a timeframe to teach a specific learning segment aligned to the curriculum, as this participant explained, “The flip side of that for undergraduate candidates, who aren't the teacher of record, is that they are typically given a topic and plan, and then the time for implementation. They must fit it in” (Interviewee 4).

Concerns about edTPA being used as a gatekeeper. Finally, considering edTPA as a gatekeeper or filter for credentialing teacher candidates who are ready for the profession and for keeping out those who are not ready, teacher educators shared their concerns regarding unintended factors for success and/or lack of success. For example, regarding unintended factors for success, several teacher educators explained that strength in analytical writing, rather than effective teaching, might be a reason for passing the assessment. In a response to whether edTPA should be used as a measurement tool to determine certification, one educator explained:

I think to be honest, I'm open on that one. I do understand the rationale behind it. I'm not sure that it is achieving what it is designed to achieve. If it is to eliminate teachers who are not qualified or who should not be out in the field, um, I'm not sure that it is doing that. If it comes down to how well you can write up your report, or how well you are as a writer, that may be a factor that is coming into play that may be an unintended factor. (Interviewee 3)

Another educator had the same perception regarding strength in writing as a factor for success:

So, I find that a little bit concerning. You are still looking at a person's ability to write analytically and write reflectively and not as much as the intangibles, and not intangibles, but the level at which you are able to motivate, the level at which you are able to engage, the level at which you are...I mean you are not giving a word by word action. You know, blow by blow commentary about what is done. (Interviewee 1)

The educator identifies the intangibles, that is, a teacher's ability to motivate and engage learners as a factor not captured, while analytical writing and reflective thinking is a factor for success.

Considering other propelling concerns and swinging backwards, two educators shared similar comments regarding the purpose of edTPA as gatekeeper, when peer support may be an unintended factor in passing edTPA:

I think that we still have the same spectrum. We still have the same continuum of teachers that are strong and not very strong. Well, and with edTPA, their peers can help them. So, you still have the slacker whose asking their peer for every, help me with this, did I do this right, and they video four times to get the video, and they're dragging in the writing day and haven't done a single thing to get ready. And so, this idea of about, they figure out ways to get through it. (Interviewee 1)

I mean and so and I'm thinking, what would prevent someone who scored real well on the edTPA who is one year ahead of their friend to say before you submit that you really didn't mention....you really need to mention....you need to point that out...you totally missed this...you need to write that in there, too. What would prevent that from happening? Then, it really is not that student's work anymore. I mean that is probably already happening. (Interviewee 3)

Another educator questioned online resources, such as passing edTPA services, and considered the low-cut score as unintended factors for teacher candidate success, saying

If they did it outside the university setting and also, you are seeing all the publications getting ready for edTPA. So, I just wonder. I'm sure a lot of that is going on, and I just wonder. When my students start talking, I'm like, I don't want to hear that, don't want to hear that, don't tell me you knew that... It probably would (help to raise cut score), and I think the intent is to eventually raise the score to the national average, and I think what it is set at right now is one standard deviation below the average. You may know more about that than I do, but I believe we will gradually move up. (Interviewee 3)

Since a clear majority of the candidates in the program were passing edTPA, teacher educators described their tensions with the assessment regarding its purpose and its effectiveness in serving as a gatekeeper to determine readiness for teaching. One educator remarked,

But, one of the things that I'm really like, I would like the [credentialing agency] to tell us exactly what is the reasoning behind it. Is it to eliminate those teacher candidates who shouldn't be teaching? Then if that is the case, very, very few of ours hasn't passed it. So, it hasn't really done anything. (Interviewee 3)

Assessment scores reflected in Appendix H – Document Review 3t – edTPA Institutional Data Analysis (July 2017) indicate that only one candidate had not passed the assessment, while two candidates received incomplete scores due to condition codes indicative of formatting problems or other issues.

Another teacher educator commented that she/he disagrees, as do some teachers and principals, about who is passing and who is not passing edTPA, remarking,

And so I've noticed that some students that I feel were really strong teachers, their scores were, and not myself, their cooperating teachers, maybe the principals who want to hire them as soon as they graduate kind of thing are not necessarily reflected in their edTPA scores. Because, and I found that less effective teachers have passing scores that we are like...we are glad they passed, because you know, it is a reflection on the program. But, we are like...you really are not a strong teacher, and this measure is not accounting for your areas of weakness. (Interviewee 1)

This respondent noted that edTPA scores may not represent a candidate's area of weakness as identified by other educators.

Finally, three interviewees explained that there are also unintended factors for teacher candidates' lack of success, when a single measure, such as edTPA, is used. Educators argued that edTPA lacked a holistic view of the candidates' experiences and discounted dispositions.

One educator noted,

I like always more than one assessment myself, even though they have different things they assess, obviously, with their tests. I think you have to look at the whole picture. I'm a person who believes in portfolio assessment, done well. (Interviewee 8)

This educator expressed concern for using a single measure, while another stated concern regarding the need for edTPA to address dispositions in assessing teaching readiness. saying,

Alright, so when I think back to all of the teachers that had a major influence in my life, and the ones I really liked throughout my life, I don't know if I can tell you anything about them other than I liked them and something in their classroom made me feel that I was valued or liked or something. (Interviewee 3)

A third individual shared tensions regarding a desire for multiple measures, but she/he swings back and forth and is unable to share a solution for providing a holistic view of the candidates' effectiveness, saying,

What would I substitute? I don't know of a single measure that I would recommend. I really believe in multiple measures to assess teacher readiness. edTPA should not be the one thing that determines if you're certified or not. We do not require students to pass

edTPA to graduate with the degree; however, they cannot become certified to teach. That makes it so high-stakes, and that's what creates the anxiety. (Interviewee 4)

Finally, another educator indicated that an unintended result of candidates' knowledge of their own limitations may be a decrease in enrollment, when teacher candidates opt-out of teaching. The participant remarked, saying,

Well, I think that you have a—it may be a self-sieve, too, because if the students who go through this and have to start really critically critiquing what they're doing some of them find this is not for me. I know I had a colleague who was talking about she had two students who all of the sudden said, "You know, I don't really think this is for me." She's in her senior year. (Interviewee 6)

Then, also, seeing themselves on video because it's hard to see yourself teach on video. Then, you see when you look at yourself, and think, "Oh, I'm just not impactful," or you're looking at another person. You're comparing someone who is very dynamic, and who really has the passion to teach, and who has the calling to teach. Teaching can be a learned trait to me because that's what our business is, right? If you don't have—if you're on the fence and think, "I really don't know if I wanna do this or if I do wanna do this," because people, of course, say, "If all else fails, I can teach." Then, they're finding that's just not the way it is. (Interviewee 6)

This teacher educator explained teacher candidates may decide that teaching is not for them, after critically analyzing their teaching effectiveness, especially following a viewing of themselves teaching on their video-recorded lessons. Teacher candidates may lose confidence in their own self-assessment and discontinue the program. While this may or may not be a good decision for the candidate, the educator expressed concern about the potential consequences.

Back and Forth: The Highs and Lows of the Benefits and Limitations

The swing continues to move back and forth as teacher educators try to make sense of their perceptions of edTPA and its use as a measure of teaching effectiveness for teacher licensure. While some teacher educators wrestled with perceptions of edTPA as a gatekeeper, considering its value as a measurement tool for teaching readiness, another teacher educator concluded that it did meet his/her expectations, saying, "I think it is an effective assessment to be

able to look at different aspects of teacher candidates to see if they are really prepared to go out and begin a teaching career” (Interviewee 2). Educators’ mixed views on the benefits and liabilities of the assessment for use in this capacity is best summarized by two educators. One noted, “So, I just don’t know. I honestly don’t know if this is the right, but if you ask me is it the best thing that we have at this point, maybe it is” (Interviewee 3). The other educator said,

So, just managing the class everyday.... yeah, there are just all those other variables that make you a really effective teacher. You know? But, I don’t know that there is an instrument that can capture that. So, like I said. It is an upgrade from the multiple choice and write to this one prompt. (Interviewee 1)

As educators spoke of the benefits of edTPA, it was clear in the data set that the emphasis on edTPA’s quality constructs, or what teachers should know and be able to do, was a strongpoint. Considering the planning-teaching-assessing-reflecting cycle, critical thinking and analytical writing, knowledge of the learners and instructional decision-making, educators agreed that these constructs were not debatable. Educators also considered the authenticity and intentionality of the assessment making claims that the teacher candidates were teaching in situ with real children and providing evidence via critical thinking and analysis behind their actions. Furthermore, they recognized that the assessment served to inform the program and to elevate the profession as the experience for teacher candidates afforded them opportunities to become professionals demonstrating responsibility, advocacy, and teacher leadership.

The educators communicated their tensions with the assessment, when they considered the reliability, the fairness, and the gatekeeping factors of edTPA. Several educators expressed concern about interrater reliability in scoring as well as the training, expertise, and level of effort required of a national scorer to consistently score a portfolio, something difficult to measure. Consideration for external, rather than internal, evaluators was also a concern. Additionally, educators questioned the fairness of the assessment as they pointed out that school context

mattered when teacher candidates were required to teach specific content areas (i.e., literacy and mathematics in elementary education). They had concerns for the traditional program candidates who might be placed in a science or social studies classroom, rather than literacy or mathematics. They also considered the level of autonomy that was afforded to provisional program candidates who were the instructors of record in their own classrooms, rather than that of a traditional candidate who was directed by a cooperating teacher. Issues of choice also surfaced as educators perceived that literacy and mathematics were privileged content areas, and teacher candidates were not given the opportunity to demonstrate their expertise in science or social studies, other content subjects taught at the elementary school level.

Finally, the idea of gatekeeping arose as educators considered the state policy. If edTPA was developed to filter out teacher candidates who were not ready for the profession, they questioned the effectiveness of the assessment. In fact, most of the program candidates were passing edTPA, and program faculty were surprised about a few. Educators considered unintended factors for success and lack of success. They shared concerns about teacher candidates who demonstrated strength in writing but who may not be effective teachers in the classroom. Additionally, what about the candidates who sought out peer support or used online resources inappropriately? They also questioned the state's low-cut score as a possibility for high pass rates. Then, educators considered reasons why a candidate might not pass, considering edTPA as a single measure and lacking a holistic view of the candidate. For example, consideration for intangibles, such as dispositions and the ability to motivate and engage learners, were qualities they alleged were not captured on the assessment.

Swinging from benefits to limitations, educators were left in a quandary as to whether they perceived the assessment as a measure of teaching effectiveness that should be used for

credentialing or not. While all eight participants found the assessment inclusive of valuable content and use, some educators questioned it as a measure demonstrating reliability, fairness, and gatekeeping. Considering that the benefits might outweigh the limitations, teacher educators left the swing to find balance on the see-saw, or did they? Next, I will discuss what affects teacher educator engagement with edTPA implementation.

Finding the Balance on the See-saw: Understanding What Affects Teacher Educator

Engagement with edTPA Implementation

While some children continue swinging, others run over to the see-saws. Children jump on the see-saws and begin moving up and down... when suddenly, one child jumps off not wanting to play anymore. Down with a harsh thump, the other child lands and becomes very unsatisfied with the unexpected loss of support. On another set of see-saws, we see two children stuck up in the air on the same end of the see-saw, legs dangling, and another child at the bottom expressing great displeasure in having to push the heavy weight back down. Sitting on one end of the see-saw alone, one child cannot find a peer who wants to get on the other end. Thinking aloud, the child says, "I can try to make this work, but I need help to keep it moving." Finally, the child solicits help from another child, and the see-saw moves up and down satisfactorily, and both children are pleased to enjoy the experience together.

As a *see-saw* allows for an "off," "on," or "pause" in response from the user ...consider what affects teacher educators' responses to and engagement with edTPA implementation. While viewing children on the see-saw, jumping off, pausing in the air, and moving up and down, visualize this change in movement and distribution of weight on the see-saw as an illustration of teacher educators' level of engagement with edTPA. To understand what affected teacher educators' engagement with edTPA, I explain their responses of *resistance* (no engagement), *compliance* (minimal engagement, responding to consequences) and/or *inquiry* (full engagement, learning more). Visualize children jumping off the see-saw as an illustration of teacher educators' resistance to engage in the edTPA initiative questioning their loss of professional autonomy. Likewise, when children dangle their feet in the air on the see-saw, creating unequal

weight, teacher educators demonstrate compliance with the edTPA initiative pausing to consider how edTPA was aligned or not aligned to their personal and/or programmatic approach to teacher preparation, to their roles, and to their responsibilities. Considering lack of engagement, teacher educators presumed the subsequent consequences for themselves and for their candidates. Moving up and down on the see-saw, children provide an illustration of teacher educators as fully engaged contributors who recognize their need for inquiry to learn about edTPA and to support their candidates with edTPA implementation and educative experiences in coursework. Fully engaged teacher educators recognized their work individually and collaboratively on the edTPA initiative. As faculty engagement in the edTPA initiative varied, so did the experiences for the teacher educators and teacher candidates (see Table 4 for an overview of the salient theme and sub-themes).

Table 4

The See-Saw Metaphor

Salient Theme	Sub-themes
Finding the Balance on the See-Saw: Understanding What Affects Teacher Educator Engagement with edTPA Implementation	<p>Jumping Off: Resistance (no engagement)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questioning loss of professional autonomy and policy decision-making <p>Dangling Feet in the Air: Compliance (minimal engagement)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subsequent consequences for self and candidates• edTPA alignment to personal and/or programmatic approach, to roles, and to responsibilities• Varying levels of knowledge and understanding• Issues of sustainability <p>Moving Up and Down: Inquiring to Learn More</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognizing need to learn more and to support candidates• Recognizing opportunities to work individually and collaboratively

Jumping Off the See-saw: Resisting by Questioning Professional Autonomy and Policy

Decision-making

Considering loss of professional autonomy in decision-making and recognizing fear of edTPA taking over program curriculum at the expense of important activities, an educator indicated some resistance, stating,

Even with the game playing in the sense that I'll do what it takes. You know, the greyhound analogy.... (laughing in unison). You know, so I think people resent that. I've read studies. I'm an article reviewer, and I've read on edTPA implementation and how people don't think it makes them a better teacher and its taking away from other high-quality activities and things that they might be able to do with the [teacher candidates]. (Interviewee 1)

This participant explained the “greyhound analogy” as when teacher candidates do what it takes just to get through to pass the test, and then they revert to their status quo method of operation which may not make them better teachers. Additionally, by reflecting on the program of study and whether the teacher educators’ opinions mattered despite the need to prepare the teacher candidates for the assessment, one educator’s comments reflected resistance, referring to the effects on the curriculum, saying, “I wouldn’t say to the degree or program of study. I think you would hear comments like, we’re an Early Childhood Ed Program not an edTPA program. It’s not like that...we are not going to get the cart before the horse” (Interviewee 3). Additionally, this educator remarked, saying,

But, there shouldn’t be anything wrong with getting our students ready with what is to come, but I think we didn’t want to teach the test. We didn’t want to be a program where the goal was pass the edTPA. But, I would say to the point of adding additional requirements to certain courses, sure. So, to that degree, yes. (Interviewee 3)

The educator indicated additional concern about lack of autonomy and the consequences for candidates, saying, “Um, but we certainly are taking it seriously here and building in within our program and in extra features in our program to have our [teacher candidates] ready for it. So, to some degree I’m thinking, it doesn’t really matter what I think, because it is full speed ahead...” (Interviewee 3).

Continuing with concerns about lack of autonomy in decision-making, fearing that edTPA will become the curriculum, an educator’s comments also reflected resistance about engaging in the edTPA initiative, noting,

That’s why I try to downplay it...and I did when I taught elementary school, too, was if you teach them, and you help them learn, and you teach them what you know they need to know, they’ll do fine on the assessments. That’s always been my—they’ll freak out about writing. Well, they have to be tested, so we need to always give them prompts. I’m like, “No, we don’t.” if we teach them how to write, and to love it, and to see it as a genuine tool for communication, when they’re tested on it and given a prompt, yeah, we can sprinkle those in throughout from time to time, but it doesn’t need to become the

curriculum. The same with edTPA. It shouldn't become the curriculum. The curriculum stays with what we know we need to prepare our teachers for, and then, in my mind, the assessments is just, well, I already know that. I got that within my program. Anyway... another thing that I would say just as an educator and, now, professor is that it takes a lot of the—I guess, which could be a good or bad thing, but it takes a lot of the professionalism out of our hands as professors. It makes teacher-prep programs feel like, okay, well, we aren't trusted enough to be able to say whether or not our teacher candidates are prepared. We have to implement this. It's scored by an outside institution. I think a lot of people see it as a money like it's expensive. What better ways could we be spending our dollars as opposed to another assessment measure? Those would be some negatives, I think. (Interviewee 5)

The educator explained her/his perception of the curriculum as one that should be designed by educators' perspectives on what teachers should know and be able to do rather than one based upon an assessment and mirroring a standardized driven curriculum. He/she stated that teacher educators were not trusted as professionals having autonomy to make decisions regarding candidate readiness for the profession.

Additionally, indicating resistance due to concern about the development of the edTPA policy and who was involved in the decision aimed at standardization in teacher education, one educator asked,

I mean was it just the [state licensure board], who decided this is the way we are going? Or, was there some degree of bringing in representatives? That would be good...I think that would reassure a lot of university faculty. (Interviewee 3)

This respondent indicated that there may have been less resistance, if more educators understood who was involved in the decision to require a teacher performance assessment for certification.

Dangling their Feet in the Air: Complying by Pausing to Consider Consequences for Self and for Candidates

A view of children sitting at the top of the see-saw provides us with an image of teacher educators who paused to consider how the adoption of a new teacher performance assessment would affect themselves as educators and the preparation of their candidates. Teacher educators'

concerns for personal and/or program perception, based upon candidate outcomes on edTPA, led to their compliance in the initiative. Additionally, teacher educators acknowledged that their compliance with the new policy was based upon their assigned roles and/or their course responsibilities as they prepared their teacher candidates. They considered the alignment of the assessment with their personal practice and with the content of their courses as determiners for their compliance. Furthermore, their understanding of edTPA influenced candidate success on edTPA and thus their compliance with edTPA initiatives. Finally, teacher educators wrestled with issues of sustainability, considering compliance yet acknowledging that the initiative might cease and their efforts would no longer be valuable.

Subsequent consequences for self and candidates. One teacher educator remarked that successful candidate preparation reflected faculty effort as assumed in their role and as a reason for compliance, as noted in the following comment:

Even though it was the students' responsibility for doing that and learning how to do that, faculty members felt a huge responsibility that they really didn't need to have. How we were taught with the training in edTPA is this is like the GACE. We don't go and hold their hands while they're taking the GACE. It's like you scaffold them up to a point, and then you—this is the part where you have to let go and see what they can do on their own. The faculty members, this was like we felt the consequences as greatly as the students did. That's what I don't like about it is the fear of failure for the faculty because they think that if the students don't pass, then they have failed. (Interviewee 6)

In addition, faculty complied with the edTPA initiative, because they considered it their responsibility to prepare their candidates due to the high-stakes consequences. Another educator responded as follows:

But I know one of the things I was impressed with them (faculty members), yesterday, was so many of these things, they just saw the need for it and did it as a program. And no one told them they had to do it. They just did it, because they thought it was the best way to get our kids ready. Is this a grass roots movement? I'm impressed! Way to go! (Interviewee 3)

Perceiving faculty responses similarly, another participant responded saying, “Here, they just seem to be like, ‘Well, this is what it is, and we’re gonna be on board with it and support our students in any way I can’.” (Interviewee 5)

edTPA alignment to personal and/or programmatic approach, to roles, and to responsibilities. Recognizing consequences of the edTPA mandate as related to her/his role in candidate preparation, a teacher educator’s remarks indicate that what was required of the policy was in alignment with his/her personal practice, and for that reason, he/she was complying. If the policy was not in alignment with her beliefs on teaching and learning, then she indicated that her response would be one of resistance or pushing back, saying, “In other words, for me as an educator, I don’t wanna sacrifice what I know my students need because of an assessment. I don’t ever want them to think we’re teaching them just what’s on the test and nothing more” (Interviewee 5). She explained further, stating,

I try hard to stay true to what I believe to be true about teaching and learning. Assuming that what I believe to be true about teaching and learning matches what the assessment believes to be true about teaching and learning, then I don’t really, necessarily, see a shift is needed, but I guess it would be if my philosophy didn’t align with what it was asking for, I suppose. I would still wanna push back on that. (Interviewee 5)

Considering that edTPA is mandated in literacy and mathematics for elementary education program candidate certification, teacher educators considered their responsibilities for the course content they were assigned to teach as influential factors in their level of engagement. Teacher educators who were assigned to teach literacy and mathematics courses recognized their need to comply to support candidate preparation in these content areas as aligned to the assessment. While literacy and mathematics educators were compliant with the edTPA initiative, bearing the weight of the see-saw, social studies and science instructors dangled at the top of the see-saw or got off the see-saw. They hesitated to get involved, since the assessment was not

aligned to their course content areas. One of the participants commented on this issue, remembering the exploration stage of edTPA, saying,

Some, and that's what turned some off to it (pilot stage). If the instructors of the course did not see that it fit into their course, then it was hard to get them to learn more about edTPA. And, I've heard so many times...it's only reading and math. Why should I do any of it? Well, you know what? We're teaching them to integrate Social Studies and literacy, and Science and literacy, so, maybe you need to be invested. You have all of the Common Core standards on informational texts. (Interviewee 2)

Another participant confirmed the idea that compliance with edTPA implementation was influenced by course assignment, stating,

...just listening to the discussion at some points in time, there were some who felt like since I don't teach a course that has an edTPA component in it, then maybe I don't have to be as quite concerned as someone who does. (Interviewee 3)

While another educator added, "In a way, I'm glad that the course I ended up with doesn't have those [edTPA signature assignments], if I'm being perfectly honest" (Interviewee 5). Explaining further why some educators pause to hang out at the top of the see-saw with minimal engagement in the initiative, another person replied, saying, "Yeah. We had literacy people play a really big part in the beginning of getting everything established because it is in elementary, it is all literacy" (Interviewee 6). This participant continued to explain how the mathematics and literacy faculty were compliant with edTPA implementation, saying, "The math, also, early childhood people, they were also very involved in that. I'm not sure how, because I can't tell you about task four because I only was involved in task one, two, and three" (Interviewee 6). Again, this educator clarified further that the social studies and science content area faculty paused to consider their need for engagement, because they did not teach literacy, remarking,

That's not a good feeling to know. The faculty, what I don't like, also, is the faculty buy-in at that particular time was not existent. No matter how many times you say, "We have to be on the same page. We have to work at this together as a team." Many of the faculty in the content areas were saying, "Well, this is all literacy. I don't teach that in my class." (Interviewee 6)

inally, an educator explained that even the literacy faculty, while complying with edTPA candidate preparation practices, considered inequitable workloads pertaining to edTPA related assignments incorporated in their courses. For this reason, program faculty tried to spread out the evaluation of one of the edTPA practice assignments among early childhood education program faculty, even though the course was offered in the literacy service department. Teacher educator disagreement, regarding the expertise needed to evaluate candidate performance on the assignment, prompted the educators' deletion of the assignment from the course. (Please refer to Document Review - 3j and 3k pertaining to the TASK 2 Note Page and Video Clip Note-taking assignments that teacher educators removed from coursework and included as a program workshop offered by the edTPA Coordinator.) The following educator shared the dilemma, resulting in a lack of engagement of the team, remarking,

It (TASK 2 assignment) was in a literacy course which makes sense. You know, TASKS 1, 2, 3 are literacy. But, the literacy faculty felt like it was a lot of work for one or two faculty members to do. We tried dividing it up, but that didn't work so well. The expert should be doing it. And so, really faculty disagreement about work load and ownership of the assignment caused it to go away. (Interviewee 1)

When the assignment was deleted from the course, fewer educators remained involved in the preparation of the candidates for the edTPA Task. Educators recognized that workload and ownership of courses including edTPA constructs and literacy and mathematics course content influenced educator engagement with edTPA implementation.

Varying levels of knowledge and understanding. Complicating the problem further, teacher educators considered their understanding of edTPA or lack of understanding of edTPA which influenced their level of engagement in providing candidate support. Expounding on issues of workload and the need for faculty expertise in evaluating candidate performance on edTPA practice assignments, an educator explained that while compliant, faculty were not

equally invested in learning about edTPA, resulting in inconsistent candidate evaluations of their assignments:

And it is hard to get [Literacy Department educators] to support it. Because they don't have an undergraduate Reading Program, only graduate level. So, they're a service to us. So, with the pushback and nobody in that faculty wanting to do it, we [Early Childhood Ed educators] divided it up and each of us took so many to grade. Faculty's level of understanding of edTPA made a big difference in the scoring of the learning segment. [Teacher candidates] were getting 4s and 5s on rubrics who shouldn't have scored that high. Constructive feedback was a problem area too. (Interviewee 2)

Providing opportunities for candidates to complete a practice edTPA learning segment, prior to the program endpoint, Early Childhood faculty indicated that the Literacy department faculty were not as invested in evaluating the candidates' learning segments which left it to the Early Childhood faculty who had varying levels of understanding. Another respondent indicated a similar finding in explaining this problem that arose when faculty provided candidates an opportunity to complete a practice learning segment across content areas,

For two semesters, program faculty agreed that the teacher candidate could teach their learning segment in any of the four, content area[s]. So, each content area professor had approximately 1/4 of the students agree to teach in his or her content area. That professor would read and score the mock edTPA learning segment. The faculty scoring was very inconsistent due to a number of reasons including varying levels of understanding regarding the edTPA rubrics as well as apathy as well and resentment over the edTPA colonization of ECED courses. Students complained about the large variance in scores and faculty complained about the increased workload and lack of edTPA training. Some also thought the students were not successful at writing edTPA commentary to science and social studies standards/topics. After speaking with [the regional coordinator], it was decided that literacy should be the only subject area for the learning segment. (Interviewee 1.1)

Since teacher educators had varying levels of knowledge and understanding of edTPA tasks, both educators explained that this was a factor that influenced educator engagement and consistent feedback for candidates. As a result, the Learning Segment and Planning Commentary Assignment (see Document Review – 3i), a practice opportunity for candidates focused on

edTPA TASK 1, was included as an assignment in a course but taught by the edTPA Coordinator in a program workshop.

In addition to evaluating candidates' edTPA learning segment practice assignments, the same educator indicated the teacher educators' challenge in understanding edTPA's definition of academic language, while preserving how they had previously defined academic language.

Considering how to prepare their candidates, the educator indicated,

Well, prior to edTPA we thought of [academic language] as fraction, denominator, numerator, or flask, beaker, burner, goggles, and so...Um, initially there was talk about academic language as more about the language function, the more nuances of edTPA. So, then there was...no edTPA doesn't get to define academic language in their own brand new way. And, you know what it meant and what it didn't mean... It's the syntax, and you know? Well, yeah, the discourse but the.... Yes, the language function...those kinds of things. We had to familiarize ourselves with what the new way of using the term was and even there was some debate over academic language which we got past in the first year. But um...so some of those things and whether the lesson was going to be composing or contrast or the other. (Interviewee 1)

While explaining initial tensions with definitions of academic language, this individual was clear that educators' understanding of edTPA was needed for their engagement and consistency in candidate preparation. Recognizing disengagement among some faculty in the edTPA initiative, another educator noted concern about what might happen if there was not an edTPA coordinator, saying, "I don't believe they would get a lot of support at this point, because I don't think enough people understand what it is that our students are being asked to do" (Interviewee 2.1).

Issues of sustainability. Finally, teacher educators viewed issues of sustainability as reasons for compliance or lack of compliance with edTPA implementation. They contemplated how they might sustain the initiative, engaging faculty, supervisors, and cooperating teachers in the preparation of teacher candidates, considering new hires and changes in role. For example, two participants shared lessons they learned regarding the need to engage the university field

supervisors and cooperating teachers in developing their understanding of edTPA. One educator discussed the need, in hindsight, to provide professional development for supervisors, saying,

It's still a struggle, but I guess 10 years down the road when we've done it, we will have a better understanding. I guess this is just the beginning pains of learning something new that we're all still struggling with. We struggled with it when we started doing the pilot of it, but we didn't bring in supervisors with it. We probably should have. If they had come in when we were in the pilot stage of studying it, then it would have helped as well. (Interviewee 2)

The other educator recognized the need to meet with school personnel to enhance their understanding of edTPA, especially for cooperating teachers, remarking,

Many educators are frustrated by continual changes in curriculum choices. I hope they don't eliminate the positive practices that are effective for student learning when they are required to add other programs. Let's stay with edTPA... If we could work with the schools more, if the teachers are on board, I really believe we need more teacher interactions, meetings, bringing them [on board with edTPA]. (Interviewee 8)

These two teacher educators recognized that engagement in edTPA was needed to sustain the initiative, balancing the weight of those involved on the see-saw, in the support of teacher candidate preparation. Even another participant expressed concern about the unequal weight of edTPA implementation placed on the edTPA coordinator and the consequences for placing much responsibility on one person rather than several, potentially influencing the level of engagement of the other educators. The teacher educator remarked, saying

There was quite a bit of throwing-their-hands-up-in-the-air experiences that they were just a little frustrated at times. Like they say they're going to but nobody's doing it. I feel like [the edTPA coordinator] was taking a lot of that responsibility on her own, as opposed to—and I wonder because—and this is just a theory. I wonder because [the edTPA coordinator] took so much on herself, did faculty just say, "Well, [the edTPA coordinator's] got it"? I know that was part of the frustration. (Interviewee 7)

The educator alluded to her/his observations that by placing a huge responsibility on one person, other educators had a reason to disengage in the edTPA initiative. The educator also considered that candidate success based upon the current level of educator involvement may have led other

faculty to the conclusion that their involvement and incorporation of edTPA in their coursework did not matter, saying,

You know what? Maybe even just theoretically, because those candidates were doing, well, fair—they were scoring okay—the faculty just think, “We’re just gonna do what we were already doing. We’ll just let them do it in their final semester because they’re passing.” (Interviewee 7)

Additionally, another educator expressed concern about efforts to engage with this new initiative only to learn that her/his efforts may not last due to future policy decisions that may have consequences for teacher educators, saying,

What happens if when [teacher licensure board director] retires and the next person comes in and does away with [edTPA]? Then, every teacher says, and you’ve probably heard this, stick it out; this is the latest thing to come down; stick it out. In a couple of years, it will be gone, too. And, I’ve heard a lot of teachers say that. And, I know you’ve heard that and I’ve heard that. (Interviewee 3)

This participant’s hesitation with engagement, beyond compliance, was primarily due to her/his consideration for effort required of the initiative as related to the sustainability of the initiative.

Teacher educators considered issues with professional autonomy, their roles, their assigned courses, their understanding of edTPA, and even sustainability as factors that influenced their level of engagement on the continuum of resistance to compliance to inquiry. Some teacher educators resisted edTPA, portrayed as a move to get off the see-saw. Other teacher educators chose compliance, visualized as putting forth effort to keep the see-saw moving, desiring successful candidate and program outcomes on edTPA.

Moving Up and Down: Inquiring to Learn More and to Support Teacher Candidates Individually and Collectively

While all teacher educators demonstrated compliance with the edTPA initiative, six educators moved back and forth on the continuum, inquiring to learn more to support their teacher candidates while improving program preparation. Considering a view of children’s

collaboration in their movement up and down on the see-saw, teacher educators learned how to work individually and collaboratively, exerting consistent forces of effort, to maintain edTPA implementation and candidate support.

Recognizing need to learn more and to support candidates. Four educators explained that the reason for their engagement with edTPA resulted from their initial exploration of edTPA and involvement with implementation activities to become more knowledgeable and to provide professional development for candidates and faculty in an effort to support candidates. One participant explained,

We had a lot of—I remember giving talks in faculty meetings talking about how it is literacy based; however, it is—we need to have it content focused across. Getting back to your question, how I was involved was we were told about it. I can’t remember who told us about it. It was down the pipe. I educated myself about it, and I took the initiative to co-conduct a pilot study to—for the early childhood program. A colleague and I, we randomly selected, I think it was around 14 students. We took them as a cohort, and we walked them through the edTPA process. This was before it was for consequence. As we were walking them through, I was going through the training at the same time. It was really kind of embarrassing because I would go in every week to class and say, “Do you remember what I told you last week? Forget about that.” [Laughter] We were just learning all together with that. (Interviewee 6)

Another participant involved in the pilot experience, learning how to locally evaluate candidates’ edTPA portfolios, said:

We piloted the assessment with the early childhood program. That was fall, I want to say fall of '14. We did a rollout, and I was involved just in some local evaluation scoring of the selection of portfolios with a very small pilot group. (Interviewee 4)

Two educators shared high levels of engagement with edTPA as they provided professional development for other teacher educators and for candidates developing their knowledge and understanding of edTPA. For example, one participant shared information on how professional development was provided for teacher educators to learn about edTPA constructs and rubrics stating, “We were very intentional in looking at every rubric. I feel like we did all 18 that day.

We'd look at Rubric 1 and planning for understanding. We'd look at the criteria at a level 3 and a level 4" (Interviewee 7). A second teacher educator's explanation of providing the needed professional development for faculty and teacher candidates indicated some concern about faculty investment in course integration of edTPA constructs such as academic language. The educator remarked,

In the past four years, we've done Academic Language training. We had some training with the local evaluations. So, we've looked at a few portfolios and talked about it. We have had discussions on the meaning of prompts. I am trying to get them to see what those prompts are and to have them incorporated into their coursework, but that has been a struggle, too. My trainings are for students with faculty invited. (Interviewee 2)

Recognizing opportunities to work individually and collaboratively. Another educator explained that involvement in edTPA related activities led to inquiry about how edTPA related to the course assessments:

...it started in get to know you edTPA trainings. You know, we have had several...I shouldn't say several. We have had trainings here where consultants have come in from other states that were further along in implementing and using it. We have gone to trainings here in the state. We've gone...I've gone to XXXX for a couple of trainings. So, I've participated in several get to know you edTPA trainings. We have met as a program faculty about edTPA, and um, what might be needed so that our students are prepared to demonstrate the skills and knowledge, etc. that they needed. So, I attended program meetings about how they should respond to edTPA, and um, you know, curriculum meetings about that. I teach a course in the program, so looking at the assessments in the course I teach and in the program. (Interviewee 1)

Still other educators explained how some faculty collaborated, initially, viewing the edTPA initiative as an opportunity for innovation, for literacy integration across the content areas, saying,

I think it's about your attitude. I don't mind it, because I believe in best practices and research, and if you're stuck in a, I don't know, one way of life, then it's a problem. For me, no, I like that openness of being able to be free. You're still free enough, and you might be more creative and innovative, but here's this package here, these are some requirements. However, you're still free to make it, I know, exciting... I worked on many trainings. Then went to many meetings, and also a couple times, once or twice a month, I would meet with the person teaching Social Studies. We would have a segment where we

would have all the undergrads come in, and we would teach them about edTPA, and try to apply it to real teaching. I connected to their classroom, what they're learning in their classes. (Interviewee 8)

Expressing a strong desire to continue collaborations with faculty to sustain literacy integration as prompted by the edTPA initiative, this participant also indicated concern regarding the sustainability of faculty interest noting, "Then the ones who were closed to literacy and just said, 'That's much more work.' It really isn't. Of course, to me it's helping [teacher candidates] comprehend. They're gonna do better in your courses" (Interviewee 8).

Finding Balance on the See-Saw: From Resistance to Compliance to Inquiry

Teacher educators demonstrated their level of engagement with edTPA as if on a continuum, moving from responses of resistance, to compliance, to inquiry, the highest level of engagement. They considered consequences for themselves and their teacher candidates. Considering an image of children jumping off the see-saw on the playground, educators resisted the edTPA initiative as they considered the mandate as a threat to their professional autonomy and the possibility of program take-over. Educators' comments were suggestive of their protection of their program curriculum and identity, explaining that their program was not designed around edTPA, and that they did not intend to teach to the test. They considered consequences to their program, to themselves, and to their candidates, explaining the need to prepare their candidates for the assessment and for success. Desiring recognition as trusting professionals and espousing for academic freedom were salient topics that educators discussed as they considered the effects of edTPA (i.e., increasing standardization and adding a measure of accountability).

Represented in an image of children dangling their feet at the top of the see-saw, creating unequal weight in engagement, some teacher educators paused to consider how the adoption of a

new teacher performance assessment would affect their roles and assigned course responsibilities in the preparation of their candidates. Their compliance was dependent upon several factors such as the alignment of the assessment with their personal practice, their role, and/or with the content of their courses. Teacher educators' level of understanding and involvement in candidate preparation resulted in responses of compliance due to concerns about candidate and program success. Issues pertaining to sustainability influenced teacher educators' level of engagement in the initiative as they weighed their role and that of others, considering the amount of effort needed to sustain an initiative that might not last. Educators also wondered what might happen with additional changes in policy. Would their efforts be for nothing? Should they engage and consider other ways to use edTPA for program innovation, or will it be a waste of their time?

The participants served as administrators (i.e. program/college leaders), course instructors, or in four cases, overlapping roles. Considering the impact of edTPA on their roles and the content of their assigned courses, educators' compliance with the edTPA initiative became clearly dependent upon whether their course was inclusive of an edTPA signature assignment or if it was a primary edTPA content area required in elementary education— literacy or mathematics. While the other content area instructors may have engaged initially with a literacy instructor, aiming for integration across content areas, this innovation did not last upon their learning that edTPA emphasized literacy and mathematics. Since faculty were unevenly distributed in their engagement with edTPA, the see-saw became imbalanced for some members who had more active roles and relevant course loads. Furthermore, when their roles changed due to a position change or a course reassignment, they no longer supported the edTPA initiative in the same capacity. For example, in two cases, course instructors may have engaged in teaching a literacy course, with an embedded edTPA assignment; however, when they were reassigned to a

non-edTPA course, the educators perceived a lack of relevance or reason for continuing to engage in the initiative.

At the inquiry end of the continuum, program leaders and course instructors worked individually and collectively putting forth effort balancing the weight as illustrated on the playground by children moving up and down on the see-saw. Teacher educators became involved in the exploration and implementation activities, engaging in professional development opportunities to gain an understanding of edTPA TASKS. Some educators provided professional development for others. Engagement was most dependent upon the responsibility that was assigned to the teacher educator for delivering/participating in professional development, for preparing teacher candidates and/or for evaluating candidate work.

A see-saw allows for an “off and on” and “pause” response from the user. To understand what affected teacher educators’ engagement with edTPA, I explained their responses of resistance, compliance, and/or inquiry as analogous to images of children’s participation or lack thereof on a see-saw. Teacher educators’ level of engagement with the edTPA initiative, resulting in varying responses of engagement, was clearly associated with various factors (e.g., autonomy, consequences for self and candidates, roles, and responsibilities).

Moving on the playground to visit the children on the playground system, I will discuss teacher educators’ perceptions of what affects teacher candidate development and learning as they considered a developmentally appropriate and satisfying learning environment in comparison to a high-stakes context. Additionally, I will explain their subsequent actions in their support of the novice teacher.

Supporting the Novice:

Perceptions of Novice Teacher Development and Learning with edTPA Expectations

Over on the playground system, children are swinging across the bars, climbing up walls, crawling through tunnels and finally sliding to the bottom. We see some children chatting with their peers, laughing, and exploding with excitement. Others are conversing and smiling in satisfaction over the accomplishments of their chosen activities, making it across the monkey bars and up the climbing wall. We see children exerting muscular force as they grab each bar and swing to the next. Likewise, they use full body strength to reach their arms upward and to extend one leg after the other in long stretches up the wall. One child is crying, following a slip or accidental fall. Two children are returning to the same activities, increasing their confidence before moving on. Finally, several children are using their large muscle skills and coordination, following one another, as they crawl through mazes of tunnels to reach the endpoint and slide downward on the curvy slide.

As a **playground system** is created for varying “developmental abilities” ... consider teacher educators’ perceptions of novice teacher development and learning in comparison to edTPA expectations on performance in a high-stakes context. Visualize educators’ selection of a playground system that promotes the physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and linguistic development of all their children. By providing opportunities for children to develop gross motor skills, to provide choice in the rigor of activities, to engage in social interactions with peers, and to participate in conversations, educators design an appropriate structure supporting the growth and development of all their learners. In comparison, consider what would happen if young learners were expected to participate and be evaluated in sports activities using equipment designed for the older student. Considering developmentally appropriate activities and equipment for their learners, educators assess their learners’ abilities and make recommendations for a suitable selection.

In response to the edTPA mandate, using a high-stakes measure for teacher certification, teacher educators considered a host of factors, including their perceptions about what affects teacher candidate development and learning. Considering characteristics of novice teachers in

juxtaposition with edTPA expectations, educators thought about the novice versus the expert and the appropriateness of the assessment, much like a playground system, and the supports needed for novices. They questioned the novice’s readiness for edTPA tasks as well as the stressors that preservice teachers typically face in and out of a high-stakes context. Desiring supports for their novice candidates, they recommended educative strategies, using edTPA constructs to develop novices’ conceptual understanding and to support novices’ completion of edTPA, during clinical practice. They considered the impact of the supports on their teacher candidates’ performance. Please see Table 5 for an overview of the salient theme and sub-themes.

Table 5

The Playground System Metaphor

Salient Theme	Sub-themes
Supporting the Novice: Perceptions of Novice Teacher Development and Learning with edTPA Expectations	<p>Novice Teacher Characteristics in Juxtaposition with edTPA Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental characteristics and analytic abilities • Inhibiting factor of stress on performance • Limiting factor of literacy demands <p>Supports Promoting Novice Teacher Development and Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting conceptual understanding of edTPA constructs • Supporting the completion of edTPA during clinical practice

Novice Teacher Characteristics in Juxtaposition with edTPA Expectations

Questioning the developmental appropriateness of edTPA for determining preservice teacher readiness for the profession, teacher educators considered the expectations of edTPA, in juxtaposition with novice teacher characteristics and analytic abilities. Additionally, teacher educators questioned how factors such as stress and edTPA language demands influenced

preservice teacher development and learning. Teacher educators supported novices using educative strategies to assist them in developing conceptual understanding of edTPA constructs, promoting their development and learning. They considered additional supports needed during clinical practice for candidates to successfully complete the edTPA portfolio.

Novice teacher developmental characteristics and analytic abilities. When thinking about the effects of edTPA on novices, considering their characteristics and analytic abilities, one teacher educator compared teaching of undergraduates to master's candidates saying,

So, trying to get this, it's a lot...I feel like I'm trying to am working to produce what would have been a master, a master's MED, you know, math teacher's thinking and language from a bachelor's degree person. And so, that's what it feels like. (Interviewee 1)

This educator gave an example to portray the increase in course rigor that is required of undergraduates because of edTPA, saying, "You know, in an MED program now, I would want you to write down what the error is and what you would do about it and tell me about the conceptual aspects...You know, (laughing)...it's a big leap!" (Interviewee 1). Recognizing the challenge for undergraduates in comparison to master's level candidates, the educator stated that analytical thinking, an expectation of edTPA, was an important change, saying, "In as far as an emphasis on thinking analytically, it has been brought down from the Master's level to the undergraduate level, and I think that that curriculum change is a positive change" (Interviewee 1). Another teacher educator considered the appropriateness of the assessment for novices and for preparing better future teachers, remarking,

I do. Then, at age 21, 22, are we asking our students to do something that they're really—their brain is not really ready yet to do? Because critical analysis doesn't really come—start clicking until you're around 25 or 26 when your brain matures. We see that in the undergraduates, but it's forcing them, at the beginner level, to start really reflecting. I do think that that makes them a better teacher candidate or teacher in the profession. (Interviewee 6)

This individual questioned the novice's readiness to engage in critical analysis and reflection.

Providing a different perspective, an educator recalled the cooperating teachers' perceptions of edTPA tasks for novices, also questioning their readiness for reflective thinking, commenting,

I'd say about 40% (of the teachers) don't see any need to do this. I've had comments like they're [teacher candidates] not ready for this. They don't understand all that they're doing. They haven't had enough experience to really do reflective thinking. (Interviewee 2)

Teacher educators named reflection as an area where support was needed and provided to promote teacher-candidate growth and development. One educator said, "I think our program is stronger because of it. I think our reflection piece is stronger, having students really reflect in more critical ways because of the prompts and the depth that the prompts require" (Interviewee 4). This educator questioned whether the same outcome would have resulted without edTPA, saying,

Would we have done that without edTPA? I would hope so. I would hope we would just always continue to revise our programs and challenge our students more and more in that way [be]cause we know reflection is such an important part of becoming a more effective teacher. I think in that—definitely, in reflection, our program is stronger. Maybe it happened a little faster with edTPA, but I would hope that we would be there anyway, that we would add that to it. Yeah, I think it has made stronger programs. I do. I wouldn't disagree with that statement. (Interviewee 4)

Recognizing that reflection is a critical component in becoming an effective teacher, this participant noted that reflection was an edTPA expectation and was promoted by the educators. When asked if edTPA improves teacher development due to program supports for teacher candidate learning, another educator also named reflection as well as other edTPA constructs, saying, "I do" (Interviewee 2).

In the two years working with interns, I believe our teacher candidates' graduate with improved skills in planning, teaching, analyzing data, and reflecting. I believe you have to live it, and you are working with interns living it, you have a better understanding, and you see the positives. (Interviewee 2)

As noted above, this participant indicated that change in teacher candidate development is most noticeable to people who work closely with the candidates. The educator remarked on other observations of candidate performance, saying,

I think we are putting out stronger, better prepared teacher candidates, because they are having to really think about what they are doing. Why am I teaching this – the importance of it. Is it research-based? I see less fluff activities in lesson plans and more actual authentic teaching. (Interviewee 2)

In addition to thinking about novices' analytic abilities, teacher educators also considered the criticality of feedback that novices need, when they are growing and developing. The edTPA guidelines for giving candidates' feedback are somewhat restrictive during clinical practice, the time of completion. One educator remarked, saying,

...I've got [to] have these two lessons, and I've got to have them in a row, and you can't give me feedback, and ...that's not authentic...for an apprentice so to speak. An apprentice needs constant feedback, and they should have it. So, it has certainly changed that aspect of it. (Interviewee 1)

This educator presents her dilemma as novices are in the survival mode, often demonstrating low self-efficacy and need for reassurance and constructive feedback as they are learning new things. The individual explained that while novices are given feedback on an assignment taken during her/his course, as an opportunity to practice analyzing and addressing error patterns, she/he cannot reassure the candidate that the learners he/she will work with later will create the same errors. When the candidate completes edTPA, during the submission window, the candidate will have new learners with misconceptions and who may not make the same errors as the learner(s) from previous experiences. The teacher candidate's ability to transfer knowledge and understanding to work with learners in a new setting will be critical as specific feedback is not permitted at that time. The educator noted, saying,

.... I think at this level they want to be constantly reassured. And, it's almost a level of reassurance I cannot give them, because it is a totally different topic with a totally

different level of students [during edTPA completion], and all I can is for this error pattern, what you are saying for where you are, is you know, yeah. (Interviewee 1)

Another teacher educator commented that novices need opportunities to practice with encouragement, saying, “I think doing those signature assignments and talking about it in classes, why they're doing [it] and giving them that feedback so they feel more secure in what they're doing” (Interviewee 2). Additionally, this participant added, “So, I think that many have negatives thoughts...so I try to encourage them to see the positives in it. This is a way to show-case what you're doing, the best part of you” (Interviewee 2).

Novices need varying supports on their playground of learning to assist them in becoming analytical, reflective thinkers who are confident and have opportunities to practice and respond to feedback. Assessing the appropriateness of edTPA, teacher educators responded to the opportunity to provide supports to promote continuous candidate development and learning.

Inhibiting factor of stress on novice teachers' performance. In addition to consideration for novice characteristics and analytic abilities, several teacher educators considered the stress placed upon novices as they are developing and learning. One educator commented, “I think the downside is that the students see it as, as I said earlier, one more stress factor to add to what they're already having to do to become certified or complete the program” (Interviewee 5). Another educator stated,

And, they might after they graduate and they look back at it, but right now as interns, they are just overwhelmed with trying to teach and do what the teacher needs them to do, and do edTPA, and interviewing and resumes and trying to have a social life.
(Interviewee 2)

Again, an educator indicated that the stress might even result in the candidate choosing another career, stating,

Well, the students are certainly anxious. I've heard them say...I've seen them get all the way to the end of the program and say you know I'm so nervous or fed up with this

whole thing. And, I'm so afraid of submitting my portfolio, and you know what, if I don't pass it, I'm gonna just go and apply to be a mailman or something like that. And, I think that they built up so much anxiety about this...you either pass this or you are not going forward that, you know. I kind of feel that it just scares them to death. (Interviewee 3)

Educators shared additional thoughts related to stressors faced by novices as they navigated the completion of a high-stakes assessment, acknowledging life issues and the added financial burden. One participant commented, "The students that are—come in so exhausted, you just think that they're—[be]cause, to me, there's no such thing as a lazy student. There's something going on. I don't know. Look at the whole picture" (Interviewee 8). Two other educators spoke to the issues of cost adding stress for the candidate in the initial edTPA submission and then again, if the candidate needed to submit a retake, remarking,

Also, I don't like the fact that Pearson is making money from this. Then, it adds another dimension and another fee for our students who already are under the pressure as students. I've been in this for a long time. Students today are not like they were when I first started. They have jobs. They have many other pressures on them, and the financial strain on them is—even though, what? \$300.00, okay. (Interviewee 6)

The second educator reflected on her view of the assessment, while considering the impact on the teacher candidates' learning experiences, saying,

I guess mixed feelings, honestly. As far as the assessment itself, like I said, I really don't have issues with it. It's more the logistical issues. The cost of it is problematic, and the cost for retakes—we've had several students who have not been able to retake because they simply didn't have the money, the \$300.00. We've only had a couple who had—I think two, actually, or one to retake the entire assessment. Even \$100.00 for many of our candidates is just not possible—they can't come up with that kind of money quickly to retake. We try to provide support as much as we can for that. The cost is problematic. (Interviewee 4)

Finally, another educator focused on an academic concern indicating, "...I think it has caused a lot of unnecessary angst. And, a big part of it is that they are not used to writing about their teaching like that. (Interviewee 1)

Identifying candidate stress as an inhibiting factor on teacher candidate growth and development, teacher educators considered ways to respond to the problem. By sharing positive intent toward her/his teacher candidates to decrease their anxiety, one educator shared, “I believe in the teaching process, the learning process. If they’re not here where they should be, you need to do something to help them get there” (Interviewee 8). The educator agreed that it was her mission to decrease candidate angst, saying, “I think I tried to build them up that they would be among the best teachers. This is a very good thing, attitude was important, and—that’s the kind of thing I did to encourage them” (Interviewee 8). This participant continued to share additional encouraging remarks for teacher candidates, saying, “Stay with it. Do it right. Don’t give up. Fight the good fight” (Interviewee 8).

Another educator shared an additional response to decrease teacher candidate anxiety, especially for newly admitted teacher candidates, stating,

I think, when we share that our students are doing very well, that helps the next group. Our edTPA coordinator for early childhood started out by having the students do a video for the group coming up behind them... - of tips, how to manage life and work and school and edTPA, things. She would show it in the block three seminar, just as an encouragement, you can do this. Don't let this overwhelm you or become your only thought. This is assessing what you already know and what you already do well. (Interviewee 4)

Teacher educators noted that over time candidates had become less anxious due to program supports and they now demonstrated more confidence with success on edTPA. For instance, one educator commented, saying,

I saw less anxiety with this group overall than I did in the group in the fall or last spring. There was less of that. I think once our students understand this is just part of getting certification, the fear is going away because now it's been two years. (Interviewee 2.1)

The other educator remarked, “On the candidate, it is—when they pass, they feel confirmed that they will be an effective teacher so that's a very positive thing” (Interviewee 8).

This educator emphasized that an educative strategy for decreasing teacher candidate stress was to preserve their learning experience by not teaching to the test and by considering edTPA constructs embedded in preparation, “in the background rather than the foreground,” remarking,

Okay. Being a former elementary school teacher and having been under the pressures of standardized testing at that level, my biggest concern as an educator was that I did not want my students to feel like they were cheated out of learning because of an assessment that they had to do [be]cause I was obsessing or teaching to the test, basically, I guess, is what it comes down to. For me, I’ve always approached my course at the university level the same way. For me, it’s my goal to help you learn to be a better educator. Yes, you have this assessment at the end. Again, I don’t have key assessments in my class, and I don’t have to do a whole lot with edTPA, but I try to make the assessment the background instead of the foreground. I would think that that is, probably, tricky for students to—they’re stressing and obsessing over this edTPA that looms in their immediate future. I just don’t want them to ever feel like their learning has been sacrificed because maybe we’ve too much aligned our instruction to what edTPA wants, if that makes sense. (Interviewee 5)

Limiting factor of literacy demands on novice teachers’ abilities to show

effectiveness. Considering the analytical, critical thinking required of novices, as well as additional stressors experienced by them, educators questioned the novice teachers’ ability to meet the literacy demands required to be successful on edTPA. For instance, one educator considered the number of prompts and the wording of the prompts as problematic for novice understanding, stating,

The thing that I dislike the most is the wording in the prompts, because it is hard for the students to figure out exactly what it is asking them to do. Especially in Task 1...they think that in every prompt they are just repeating themselves. I think it has too many prompts that they have to work on. They just get so stressed out trying to do it all. And I think you could show-case what their knowledge and abilities and teaching skills, if it was cut down some. I don’t think you need all of that to show-case it. (Interviewee 2)

Again, describing the wording on the assessment as too difficult for novice understanding, the educator commented,

Those are the kinds of things that I think, if it was worded different and not as involved, I think it would be accepted easier by students. They would not see it as a burden, but more as a tool to help them grow as a teacher candidate. I don't think most of them see it as a tool right now. (Interviewee 2)

Regarding a teacher candidate's writing readiness to complete edTPA, several educators shared their thoughts. One stated,

But, you need to be able to be understood. The reader needs to be able to follow your train of thought, your flow and organization in your writing. Um, to be successful...um, I think you need to have mastered most of the curriculum in early childhood in that regard...at least in literacy and mathematics. (Interviewee 1)

Another educator also commented on novices' needs for strength in writing, and she/he strongly recommended the need for tenacity, saying,

I think it's much like any hurdle that you have to go through. Tenacity. They need tenacity, and they need to be able to have writing skills or be able to articulate clearly what they are doing, what they're going to do, and how they did what they did. Tenacity, yeah, I think is most of what they need and organizational skills for sure. Organization, tenacity, and up the game on critical analysis. (Interviewee 6)

In addition to strong writing skills, novices also need negotiation skills, as they must communicate, orally, with their teachers about when they will be permitted to teach their learning segments in literacy and mathematics. One educator pointed out saying, "They have to negotiate with their teacher. And that negotiation may be favorable or not" (Interviewee 1).

Another educator explained that being able to articulate their needs to gain teacher support was critical for a novice who was just learning how to teach and fit it all into a class context that was not their own, commenting,

—I think the only problem was that when they're in the field, some of the teachers felt they didn't want to adapt to it. Getting those teachers to support the preservice teachers was very important when they're going out there, saying, "Need to do this this way." "I need to videotape myself." "I need to look like this, and these are some of the pieces I have to include as part of the steps of edTPA process for my lesson plan." The preservice teachers were taught to emphasize the purpose and importance of using a teaching strategy before, during, and after reading and writing across the content areas during the

lessons. They also encouraged classroom students to discuss why the strategy was important to use independently. (Interviewee 8)

This educator acknowledged that novice teachers may have difficulty communicating all their needs to implement edTPA effectively, considering the expectations to plan and video-record lessons within a timeframe approved by the teacher.

Recognizing that teacher candidates need supports to engage in a satisfying, safe, and appropriate learning environment, teacher educators considered new structures of support on the teacher candidates' playground.

Supports Promoting Novice Teacher Development and Learning

Teacher educators identified multiple ways to support their teacher candidates to decrease candidate stress in a high-stakes learning environment and to promote the development of their knowledge and skills and ultimate success on edTPA. Educators provided supports for novice teachers to conceptually understand edTPA constructs and to improve their practice.

Additionally, teacher educators identified supports novices need to successfully complete edTPA during clinical practice.

Supports novice teachers need to conceptually understand edTPA constructs to improve practice. Teacher educators provided educative supports for novice teachers to develop conceptual understanding of edTPA constructs, thus promoting their growth and development, while improving their practice. One educator commented on the importance of helping teacher candidates learn how to get to know their learners, a construct included in the edTPA and critical for their growth and development, stating,

I like the fact that they have to think about the context of the student. I would say that developmentally, that is a weak area for them. It's a weak area for practicing teachers, so you know, I think it's a good idea to have conversations about it to get their minds thinking about it, but you know, it's not a strength of the cohorts that we've had in passing. You know, their writing is acceptable, but there wouldn't be high quality

differentiation on most people's radar, I'd say. But again, I think the same as the practicing, the majority of practicing teachers in that regard...on the teacher continuum. (Interviewee 1)

Considering novices' abilities to plan for instruction, another teacher educator stated that preservice teachers need support not only in identifying the central focus of their learning segment; but also, they need support in learning how to make connections with their learners' prior knowledge. Planning for instruction and assessment, an edTPA construct, is a difficult task for the novice yet an important one. This educator stated,

Well, first of all, I believe they need to hone in on what it is they want their students to know and understand. I've noticed in writing, in particular, we use mentor text a lot to teach a writing concept. A lot of my students wanna see that as a reading standard. I talked to them. Yes, there are reading standards that would be secondary, I guess, to this lesson, but your primary goal as a writing—to know what is my primary goal, what do I want my students to be able to know, and now, what are strategies I can use to go about teaching those students that. Again, it's thinking about what do my students already know? How can I connect this to something they already know? That, to me, I've found to be a hard component for pre-service teachers because they're not in the classroom with these students all the time. (Interviewee 5)

This educator explained that because teacher candidates are using mentor texts as examples to teach a writing standard, the candidates get confused and select a reading standard. Recognizing that the edTPA expectation for elementary teacher candidates in literacy is to create a learning segment focused on comprehension (i.e., reading) or composition (i.e., writing), the educator shared how assisting candidates in understanding the central focus of their learning segment, aimed at reading or writing, as the primary goal, was followed by their understanding of their learners' needs to inform their planning.

An additional example is given by an educator describing how to assist teacher candidates in unpacking the curriculum standard to understand it, to identify academic language demands, and to plan for academic language instructional supports.

Because I know when the students were planning for clinic, they worked on it week to week. Students would each week right before clinic when they would go into work with their client they would grab a book or try to pull something together. Last summer we unpacked the standard. We came up with at least eight to ten different activities, graphic organizers, writing assignments, books they could use. Then they just started pulling from what they'd already pulled together from the research activity. (Interviewee 2)

The educator recognized that this activity served as a future resource for teacher candidates, when they were completing TASK 1, the planning component of edTPA, and TASK 3, the assessment component of edTPA. Providing opportunities for candidates to identify academic language instructional supports, prior to edTPA completion, the educator indicated was a useful planning resource. Developing teacher candidate conceptual understanding of academic language, teachers acknowledge is critical for edTPA success and their candidates' development and learning. The participant commented on the effectiveness of the signature assignments embedded in coursework as positive supports for teacher candidate learning and used to develop their conceptual understanding, remarking,

I think once they have submitted and I can actually look at what they are doing and what they have submitted, I can see where, some of the things, the signature assignments that we have built to get them there, have made a difference. (Interviewee 2)

This teacher educator compared two semesters, one inclusive of a signature assignment and the other semester without it. The educator noted that the strategies provided for teacher candidates in the assignment assisted their development of a learning segment and helped them conceptually understand the curriculum standard and how to support the academic language demands required in the segment for their learners. I noted in the Document Review 3c – Assessment and Correction: Reading Education Syllabi the inclusion of the new assignment in the course, summer 2016; however, it was completed by candidates in a program workshop offered outside of course time. The educator perceived that the assignment made a difference in candidate performance; however, I did not have documentation of assessment results to support this claim.

Another educator identified the supports preservice teachers need to conceptually understand edTPA, including how to teach academic language and revisiting assessment terminology, such as the evaluation criteria, saying,

Now, what gives everybody anxiety is the actual language within edTPA. That, to me, is that if we want our candidates to be successful, we gotta unpack what syntax means. We've gotta unpack what the language demands just in general mean. I'm not even kidding. Even evaluative criteria. Our candidates are like, "What's evaluative criteria?" It's a rubric, maybe. It's how you wanna grade them. They just don't talk that way (i.e. some of the language within the handbook). Having those kinds of conversations/practices prior to edTPA. I think that's how candidates can actually be successful. (Interviewee 7)

Finally, one educator commented that while it is important for teacher candidates to know how to provide access for their learners to the academic language in the lesson, to do so, teacher candidates must understand the language found in the curriculum standard themselves to support their learners, saying,

Again, I think as I was finishing up with that academic language question, I have found in teaching that another part to that, not only your students' understanding, but you, yourself, as the educator understanding what is persuasive writing? What is an interrogative sentence? Do I even know what this is? If I don't, is there someone I can go to to clue me in on that? (Interviewee 5)

Educators also mentioned the need to embed edTPA constructs in coursework focusing on assessment and differentiation, areas where more support would benefit novice success on edTPA and promote their development. One educator spoke about assessment and reflection, saying,

Assessment is very important for them to know what informal assessment looks like and how it informs our instruction as we move forward, and then what a summative assessment might look like for this, and then being able to take that data that you have from your assessments and figure out how does this inform my next move in the classroom instructionally with my students. Then, for me, a key component is that reflection piece that's often missing in the classroom. I think we just get so busy, and mired down in survival, and am I ready for tomorrow that we don't stop to think about yesterday and how if could just stop and think about what happened in this lesson, there may be things that we can change or alter about our instruction or our approaches or

strategies that we've used that we can go back to and change. I guess that would be the planning, the implementing, the assessing, and the going back and reflecting. (Interviewee 5)

Acknowledging that novice teachers have difficulty differentiating instruction, another edTPA construct, an educator identified that novices need support for success, explaining,

I think they really need to, in their training, come up with additional ways to do the differentiation piece, because it was the hardest piece for the [teacher candidates] to get, so more emphasis on differentiation. More emphasis on how you adapt literacy strategies to different content areas. I think we were successful, pretty much, made a difference. The literacy professors worked diligently to have the preservice teachers include literacy skills when teaching across content areas. (Interviewee 8)

This educator highlighted the teacher educators' initiative in integrating literacy across the content areas to support candidate understanding of how to adapt literacy strategies to differentiate instruction in other content areas. Although the educator indicated that the initiative made a difference in candidate performance, this initiative was not sustained due to lack of faculty engagement.

Supports novice teachers need to complete edTPA during clinical practice. Teacher educators also recognized that novices need supports to complete edTPA during clinical practice (i.e., time management in field and on campus, mentor teacher buy-in and professional development, permissible degree of supervisor support). Considering ways to support time management, an educator shared her/his awareness of the need to use a pacing timeline and to encourage peer support, saying,

I do a timeline for the semester up until the time that we are ready to submit. You should be working on this Task during this timeframe. You have two weeks to work on it, and then when we have our writing day, you bring all of your stuff in, and then work through the task talking with your peers and answering the prompts. They help each other. They will read their answers to the prompts. Did this make sense? they help each other analyze their data, their assessments. So, that's made a difference. (Interviewee 2)

I verified evidence of the teacher educator's provision of a pacing timeline for candidate use as noted in the Document Review – 3p – Wiki document. Also, educators indicated that cooperating teachers, who will be hosting novice teachers, need knowledge and tools to support their teacher candidates as they adhere to a timeline for implementation. One educator, who was initially engaged in the edTPA initiative, shared

Another thing I don't like is the pressure, that added pressure that it puts on the teacher in field placement, because what I was hearing is, "I don't want a student because I don't know about this edTPA. I don't want to know about the edTPA." Now, it may be better because they've had a couple of years under their belt, and the processes may—the early childhood people and the person who is over that may have established a rapport with the teachers and a guideline for them to say, "This is what you can do. This is what you don't have to do. (Interviewee 6)

This educator explained that some cooperating teachers did not desire to host a teacher candidate, because the program had not initially provided any professional development for mentors. Another educator explained that teacher educators did not originally think cooperating teachers needed professional development to fully understand edTPA, since their understanding of the teacher's ability to provide feedback to teacher candidates was limited, saying,

Trying to balance—another area that's a challenge, and I don't know that it's really [an] effect, we still are struggling with our partner schools in getting our cooperating teachers on board. On board meaning just knowledgeable of the edTPA. I think at first we were not clear about the cooperating teacher's role in edTPA and the belief became you (cooperating teacher) can't have anything to do with edTPA. You can't answer questions. You can't be a part. This was frustrating for them because, it was being implemented in their classroom with their students. (Interviewee 4)

This educator explained that teacher educators misinterpreted the rules provided by Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) regarding how mentor teachers could support their candidates, during edTPA implementation. As a result, program faculty did not involve cooperating teachers, initially, in any professional learning. Recognizing that this was a problem for their novices, this educator confirmed that issues pertaining to support needed for

cooperating teachers had been addressed but were not completely resolved. I noted in the Document Review – 3u – edTPA Partner Schools PowerPoint evidence of the educators’ attempt to provide knowledge for school administrators and mentor teachers. Additionally, the educator explained the importance of communication with school representatives to support candidate implementation of edTPA, saying,

It really does require careful planning and scheduling to have the lessons implemented, the learning experiences implemented, the videoing and the hours and hours of video that the student really needs to do to capture those strong clips, to really showcase their questioning skills or whatever they're focusing on, to really choose good quality that reflects their strong teaching. They can't just video one lesson. I mean, it requires a lot of planning and setup, coordination in the schools, and we just have so little control over that. (Interviewee 4)

The educator continued explaining that since the teacher candidates needed support in completing their edTPA portfolios, educators requested more time out of the field for candidates to write their edTPAs. This presented additional problems with their mentor teachers who did not want them pulled from their field placement. The educator mentioned a program support called “writing days,” already designed by the edTPA coordinator to alleviate stress and to provide time out of field for candidates to write-up their edTPAs. (Please refer to evidence in the Document Review – 3n Boot Camp Writing Days noting this practice.) While this was a supportive strategy for candidates, this participant realized that it was not enough and that mentor teachers had complaints, remarking,

Every semester the teacher candidates ask for more writing days, and we just are not able to do that. We're looking at other models, other universities, how are they transitioning? How can we better prepare our students earlier so that [teacher candidates] are feeling more confident in—and it's not that they don't feel confident. It's a high-stakes test or high-stakes assessment, I should say. There's a lot of anxiety with that, and we're just looking at any way we can possibly lessen that anxiety... Our cooperating teachers are very much on board to support us, but yet they're saying, but we get a flow of co-teaching going and then [the teacher candidates] they're out of the classroom for writing days and then they're back. The logistics of that—but yet, we don't know what—we are still working on where that balance is, how many days, what should be the focus. We try to

explain to them if your expectation is that you will complete edTPA during these writing days, that's inaccurate. You're not going to be able to do that. This is going to require intensive time outside of school, outside of your field placement, to complete this, but they don't want to believe us. (Interviewee 4)

Another educator indicated her/his need for more time to support the teacher candidates on-campus; however, meeting the needs of the cooperating teachers and the course instructors seemed equally problematic, saying,

And I'd like to be able to go through the handbook and highlight things with [the teacher candidates], but teachers don't want us to pull them from the field and there are not enough days to do it, and no one wants to do it in their course. (Interviewee 2)

This educator shared concern about the lack of support from mentor teachers, including their negative attitudes and the transfer of negativity to teacher candidates, stating,

But, many of the teachers see this as this is keeping you from doing what you need to be doing in the classroom. And I'm not sure why that thought process is there, because they are not working on writing it while they are in school. It is just teaching their lessons and re-engagement. So, I'm not sure where all of this negative is coming from the teachers... I don't know what the problem is. The veteran teachers see this as just another thing that Georgia is making students jump through. If you look at it that way and talk about it that way with students, then they are going to pick up your attitude. (Interviewee 2)

This educator also recognized the missed opportunity for principals to learn about instructional supports that would benefit her/his new teachers, replying,

It also let's principals, if they look at any of this, have an idea of where their first-year teachers are and what kinds of things they would need to do to support them. But, many principals in this area do not have a good understanding yet. The cooperating teachers do not always understand the process, so the students sometimes struggle to complete parts of edTPA. (Interviewee 2)

Providing Structures of Support: Promoting Novice Teacher Development and Learning

I examined teacher educators' perceptions about what they perceived to be the effects on candidate development and learning resulting from the edTPA mandate, a high-stakes measure for teacher certification. Considering the characteristics of novice teachers in juxtaposition with edTPA expectations, educators reflected on the appropriateness and design of the assessment,

much like selecting a playground system for a beginner or novice versus one for the developmentally advanced or expert. The educators compared the novice, preservice teacher to the expert, master's program level candidate, noting analytical thinking and reflection as needed skills, not only for successfully completing an edTPA, but also for becoming teaching professionals. Additionally, they recognized that these skills take time to develop, and a novice needs ongoing, constructive feedback much like an apprentice for continued growth in learning. In a state of survival, the novice needs constant reassurance and opportunities for practice to develop confidence and to transfer knowledge and skills to new learning. While educators viewed the skills required of edTPA as a positive change in the undergraduate curriculum, they remarked on the restrictiveness of the timing of feedback that was permitted to support the ongoing growth and development of these skills for novices.

Furthermore, teacher educators questioned the novice's readiness for edTPA tasks as well as the undue stressors placed upon teacher candidates, while in a high-stakes context. Recognizing that stress is an inhibiting factor on learning, educators indicated their concern for the high-stakes, anxiety producing assessment which was of concern for academic, personal, and financial reasons. Candidates' readiness for the assessment design was questioned due to the large number of prompts requiring a response and the wording of the prompts which needed clarification for the novice. According to educators, the need for candidates to respond to edTPA literacy demands requiring oral communication skills for edTPA implementation negotiations with their cooperating teachers and analytical writing skills also seemed developmentally inappropriate for a novice.

Desiring supports for their novice candidates, teacher educators recommended educative strategies that they perceived would have a positive impact on novice teacher development and

learning. Educators recommended that strong teacher preparation should include edTPA constructs as the focus of instruction rather than teaching to the test. Teacher educators identified supports needed for novices to conceptually understand edTPA constructs and to improve their practice. Educators recommended that signature assignments and opportunities for teacher candidates should be embedded in coursework in the program. They identified class conversations as critical for novices to begin thinking about the context of their learners and their prior knowledge when planning for instruction. Unpacking the curriculum standard to understand the central focus of their learning segment, teacher educators considered opportunities for novice practice. Additionally, teacher educators engaged novices in assignments and created resources to assist their candidates' developing knowledge and use of academic language. Educators identified reflection as an area associated with an improvement in candidate development and learning, resulting from the use of supports with novices to promote deep thinking and reflection in response to edTPA prompts. They also noted improvement on candidate performance on other edTPA tasks, such as, planning, teaching, and analyzing data attributed to signature assignments. Embedding explicit instruction on assessment and differentiation, two other areas in need of improvement, educators indicated that supports promoted the development and learning of novices and their learners. To decrease novice anxiety, educators recommended peer support, encouraging words, and celebrations of success. They associated supports with a decrease in candidate anxiety and passing scores with an increase in self-efficacy.

Teacher educators also considered supports for novices as they were completing the edTPA portfolios, during clinical practice. Helping candidates organize their time, using pacing timelines, was a suggestion. Educators indicated that one of the most needed areas for candidate support was from their cooperating teachers and principals. Teaching and developing an edTPA

in a positive, supportive learning school context was noted as a missing but needed support for novices. Educators shared that opportunities for candidates to learn from teachers and principals was absent due to teachers lacking interest in learning about edTPA, lack of professional development provided for teachers in the exploration phases of edTPA implementation, and teacher negativity regarding the implementation support needed for novices in their classrooms. Teacher candidates also presented conflicts for their teachers, when they were pulled from the field by program educators to write up their edTPA portfolios. Losing time in the field to complete the assessment served as a needed support for novices but a point of contention for the teachers. Teacher educators responded by providing explicit information on edTPA content and implementation for teachers and principals to support the development and learning of their candidates. Educators indicated that the process was in motion; however, teacher and principal support is not fully resolved.

Up to this point, I have considered teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA as a measure of teaching effectiveness, factors affecting teacher educators' engagement with edTPA, and teacher educators' perceptions of novice teacher development and learning in juxtaposition with edTPA expectations in a high-stakes context, followed by their actions of support. Finally, I will discuss teacher educators' actions resulting in curriculum change as explained by changes in their personal practice, within their courses, within their program, and at the college and university levels. Having conducted a document review, I will refer to documents in Appendix H to provide supporting evidence of these changes. Leaving the playground system, I will discuss teacher educators' design of the obstacle course or challenging curriculum pathway and the experiences provided for teacher candidates' completing it.

The Obstacle Course of Teacher Education Program Reform:

Teacher Educators' Actions Resulting in Change

Noticing an obstacle course alongside the edge of the playground, children scurry over to investigate the challenging pathway that they have discovered. Looking intently at each obstacle, one child begins quickly, running through hoops, and jumping over mini-hurdles. Feeling a sense of personal accomplishment, the child nears the hanging ropes and grabs hold to begin swinging from one to the other. Falling to the ground, the child gets up and brushes off the grass. Not deterred by the fall, the child moves to the balance board and slowly walks across it to the finish. Other children are impressed with the child's ability to make it through the challenging pathway. Each child, slowly but surely, engages in the challenging activity, tackling one obstacle at a time. We see the teacher approach the course, encouraging children as they become discouraged. Occasionally, children run over to the teacher looking for affirmation. Some children repeat activities until each task is successfully mastered, and everyone cheers. Then, we see children get in line to do it all over again, but this time, they aim to do it better.

As an **obstacle course** is developed as a “challenging pathway” aimed at accomplishing a goal...consider teacher educators' actions resulting in change as they tackle the obstacle course of teacher education curriculum and program reform. In the following section, I discuss teacher educators' actions resulting in change in their personal practice, within their courses, across their program, and at the college and university levels. Considering their experiences with edTPA from its onset, teacher educators' perceptions as associated with a host of factors have resulted in actionable responses regarding their engagement, their support of teacher candidate development and learning, and their level of programmatic, curriculum change (see Table 6 for an overview of the salient theme and sub-themes).

Table 6**The Obstacle Course Metaphor**

Salient Theme	Sub-themes
The Obstacle Course of Teacher Education Program Reform: Teacher Educators' Actions Resulting in Change	<p>Stepping Up Individually: Change at the Personal Practice Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporating academic language in course instruction• Redesigning course rubrics focused on evidence• Emphasizing the connection of practice to research and theory• Collaborating to integrate literacy and other content areas <p>Designing Each Obstacle on the Challenging Pathway: Change at the Course Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Created more rigorous assignments in literacy and mathematics courses• Modified existing assignments• Added new assignments to incorporate reflection questions, to emphasize data analysis and the use of evidence• Revised the lesson planning template <p>Setting the Course for Achievement: Change at the Program Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aligned program documents to edTPA constructs• Created workshops outside of coursework• Used edTPA data to establish program improvement goals and to improve candidate performance <p>Navigating through Unexpected Changes at the College Level: Change at the College Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reorganized departments• Created infrastructure supports

Stepping Up Individually: Change at the Personal Practice Level

Considering the benefits and limitations of implementing a teacher performance assessment with novices in a high-stakes context, teacher educators at StateU stepped as individuals to consider their practice. Educators experienced challenges on the teacher preparation pathway in support of personal, teacher candidate, and program success. Several teacher educators indicated that they had changed their personal practice due to their perceptions of edTPA's benefits, its alignment with their personal approach to teacher preparation, or in support of candidate preparation.

Commenting on her/his approach to teacher preparation, one educator said, "I feel like I've changed my own practices. I've become more intentional" (Interviewee 7). Another educator spoke of how edTPA has led to improvements in his/her personal practice, including criteria in course assignment rubrics drawing on evidence and including academic language, saying,

You know what. To be honest...possibly. And I say that it improved the rubrics that I used in my class. Because I probably had more of "described what you did." I had more descriptive reflections and some summarizing, but now I do emphasize evidence. Again, the emphasis on evidence has improved. So, in that sense, the emphasis on evidence, the emphasis on appropriate academic language, I think that is a good thing. I think [the edTPA has led to improvement] even with the stress around it. (Interviewee 1)

Another educator indicated that including attention to academic language in course rubrics was an improvement in her/his practice, remarking, "I encouraged the preservice teachers to use academic language when sharing ideas and writing in my courses. I also updated my rubrics to include more academic language" (Interviewee 8). In addition to embedding academic language in course rubrics, this participant also explained attempts to be intentional about incorporating edTPA constructs:

It made me really think about how I would infuse academic language when teaching literacy skills and strategies. When I was teaching that course, I modeled how to use the

correct wording (academic language) when teaching. As a result, my own teaching improved. (Interviewee 8)

Considering intentionality in using research-based strategies, an edTPA construct, another educator replied, saying,

Mine? Yes. I am more conscious of making sure that when I am teaching, I help them see connections and finding the evidence. And, why are we doing this? Is this research-based? Does what you chose to do really assess what you want it to assess? Moving away from the fluff stuff. (Interviewee 2)

Providing practice for teacher candidates to use evidence identified in teaching practices and/or as noted in student learning, this educator relied heavily on the edTPA construct of connecting practice to research and theory.

Finally, one educator indicated that he/she had become more collaborative because of edTPA. This individual desired to get faculty and teacher candidates to integrate literacy across the content areas. The participant explained, “My goal was to be in there and integrate literacy with other disciplines. Even though [the instructor] was Social Studies, I still tried to help them [to] integrate literacy in all subject areas” (Interviewee 8). This participant highlighted efforts to co-teach in program workshops with another faculty member, saying, “We co-taught about edTPA, and it would be—beyond their regular courses. Those were not their courses. That was just meetings with them” (Interviewee 8).

Designing Each Obstacle on the Challenging Pathway: Change at the Course Level

Like teachers who create obstacle courses or challenging pathways on the playground for their pupils, teacher educators worked individually and collectively to design curriculum considering the modification of coursework in the redesign of a challenging teacher preparation pathway for their candidates. Identifying specific learning outcomes, including alignment to edTPA constructs, teacher educators created rigorous assignments within their courses and

assessed candidate progress as their candidates moved through the challenging pathway.

Teacher educators' actions, including changes in course assignments in response to edTPA, supported teacher candidate success at meeting their goals of passing edTPA and becoming certified.

Three educators indicated that the faculty made modifications to course assignments and, in some cases, added new assignments to incorporate reflection questions and/or an emphasis on data analysis and the use of evidence. One remarked:

We are asking students in reflection questions to cite the evidence...what is the evidence of this? Because that is what children in the schools are being asked to do with Georgia Milestones. I try to model that here with the assignments that I am using in my course. We use it in the reflections questions when they teach lessons in the field. Okay, how do you know there was growth? What is the evidence? Cite your evidence. I want to see it. (Interviewee 2)

The same educator named two assignments (Document Review, 3a-3e; see Appendix H for descriptions of all documents cited in this chapter), where changes were made to the Mathematics and Literacy Case Study assignments and corresponding rubrics. The educator summarized,

Yeah, we changed signature assignments to align more with practice activities for edTPA. We've [taken] the case studies in Reading and Math and really aligned them to analyzing data: why did you do it? What is the research that goes behind it? What is your evidence that there was growth? So, there's been changes there. (Interviewee 2)

The educator went on to explain that both of the case study assignments were modified, following the exploration of edTPA, to include prompting reflection questions and an added component of whole class data analysis. In the data analysis component, the teacher candidates looked for trends and patterns in their data sets to determine next steps for instruction in mathematics and literacy. Additionally, candidates were required to provide alignment to research and/or theory.

Another educator offered additional observations giving the following explanation,

I added a whole class analysis, mock piece where I have a class set of data and they look at it. I added an assignment with a whole class analysis because before it was really focused on individual analysis or small group analysis, not whole class. (Interviewee 1)

This educator continued to explain the benefit of the change, the prompting reflection questions for candidate response, saying, “Well, the edTPA prompts are good so it actually improved our reflective piece in that regard as they answer the edTPA prompts... instead of just generic outcome prompts that we had before” (Interviewee 1). Finally, another educator considered course changes, saying,

The literacy assessment course, has been tweaked over the last—at least over the last two years to address some of the prompts and to make sure that our students are having experiences that prepare them well for tasks, especially for task three, since those are both focused on assessment. (Interviewee 4)

This respondent also recalled how the case study assignments, located in the lab component of the mathematics course and embedded in the literacy course, were modified to include reflection prompts focused on assessment, which is an edTPA component of TASK 3.

Continuing emphasis on data analysis, two educators mentioned a plan to revise the Probability and Statistics for P-8 Teachers course to focus more heavily on data analysis. Upon a review of the syllabi (Document Review, 3h), I confirmed that the change had not occurred as of spring 2017. One educator indicated the timing of the proposed change, saying,

Yeah, another thing we’re moving to in the fall is that course in the math, the probability and statistics, that they take on the other side of campus (laughing), we’re changing it to a data analysis course, and creating a new course that is going to take that place, because they don’t teach probability in the schools anymore in K-5. So, we’re working on creating this new course, now, with [a college administrator’s] help and direction in this... So, we can help them understand the importance of analyzing the data and how to look at it and then what to do with it after you have done it. So, that’s one of the things that we are hoping to have in place by fall. We’ll see if that helps them understand, and we will be using real class data to help them look at it. So, we’ll see. I’m hoping that is going to work. (Interviewee 2)

Sharing information about other course changes, an educator explained that all the methods courses had been reviewed. Another educator confirmed what I found in the document review regarding the revision to the reading and mathematics assessment courses (discussed previously), as well as the introduction of the revised lesson plan format (Document Review, 3o), in the classroom management course. She/he remarked, saying,

The methods courses, I know they've all been reviewed, but I don't know the extent of all the revisions. I know all of the methods courses have been looked at very carefully and aligned with the rubric, with the different rubrics, for example planning. In the block one course where they focus on writing lesson plans, the lesson planning template was revised to have different components that align with the "edTPA" lesson plan template - SCALE still had as a sample template. We use that so I know that course, as well, at least the lesson planning piece of that, was revised. (Interviewee 4)

Another teacher educator explained an assignment created in a literacy course that provided an opportunity for teacher candidates to use the new lesson plan format. The new format focused on the planning process, including the incorporation of academic language, assessment alignment to learning goals, instructional strategies, a mini-lesson for writing, and an emphasis on differentiation. The participant elaborated to describe the assignment and provided a detailed account of what teacher candidates are required to do for edTPA, saying,

Okay. They essentially have to come up with a standard that they're going to address. In [one] case, it's a writing standard. Then, they zoom in on an element that they're going to work on within. Currently, some [teacher candidates] are going to teach a lesson in a classroom this week, and they're working on persuasive writing and specifically, using persuasive language in their writing. Then, they have learning goals and objectives. Then, the essential questions and "I can" statements is part of that lesson plan. Then, they have the language function, terms or words, and then so what students will [be] able to do like use, connect, write, create. Then, they have the academic language. Those are terms that might be in the standard that the students might be unfamiliar with that they're gonna need to describe like persuasive or opinion, those kind of things... Then, they have how they're going to assess the students based on their lessons so what assessments they're gonna use; are they formative or summative? Then, what are their instructional strategies? For writing, they have a mini lesson, and then a work time, and a closing. Then, they go into detail about that. They talk about how they're gonna differentiate for the diverse groups of students in the classroom, so what are they gonna do for their, maybe, struggling or reluctant writers? What are they gonna do for their advanced or

gifted writers? Then, they have what materials they need and additional resources that they're gonna use. That's, essentially, what the lesson plan that the elementary ed program asks them to do. It's not a key assessment or anything [in the] class, but [we] use it just so that it's somethin' that they are familiar with already. (Interviewee 5)

This educator provided a very detailed account of the components of the revised lesson plan format which was aligned to edTPA and included criteria for unpacking the curriculum standard, academic language demands, formative and summative elements, and knowledge of learners and differentiated instruction.

Finally, their candidates enroll in the Teaching Internship and Teaching Internship Seminar courses during student teaching, their final semester, and complete edTPA (Document Review, 3f and 3g, for the course syllabi review which includes the edTPA assignment). In my review of the course syllabi, the new syllabus included edTPA as a student-teaching requirement. Upon a review of the ECE BSED Program Map and Detailed Program Map, the program of study (Document Review, 3r), interview data, and other accessible documents, I did not find course revisions in any other courses. I noted that the main areas of change focused in literacy and mathematics, edTPA content areas of emphasis for elementary education. The remaining changes are found at the program level in workshops facilitated by the edTPA coordinator.

Setting the Course for Achievement of Each Obstacle: Change at the Program Level

In addition to changes at the course level, where instructors added or modified specific assignments, carefully designing the challenging pathway, I found significant changes at the program level. Teacher educators created changes at the program level to assist teacher candidates in their achievement of each obstacle or challenge along the pathway. Educators' changes at the program level were related to program alignment with the edTPA, workshop support for candidate preparation, and data use aimed at improvement in candidate and program performance. Teacher educators embedded edTPA constructs as program requirements,

providing opportunities for teacher candidate practice aimed at meeting their goal to successfully complete the program of study and edTPA leading to teacher certification.

Aligning program documents to edTPA constructs. A teacher educator shared that program faculty were working to align the vision and mission statement to edTPA constructs; however, the document was still in draft form and was titled Early Childhood through Secondary – Our Vision, Our Mission. I noted in the document analysis (Document Review, 3s), edTPA alignment was evident in the vision and mission statement provided in the most recent statement. For example, the vision statement emphasizes “innovative teaching practices, educational research, community engagement, and creative activity” which is aligned to edTPA rubrics highlighting instructional strategies connected to theory and research. Additionally, noted in the vision statement is “an appreciation for diverse populations and perspectives” which is aligned to edTPA TASKS 1 and 2 focusing on respect for diverse perspectives. Furthermore, the mission statement was aligned to edTPA in many ways. For example, the following phrases are aligned to edTPA: “leaders who value diversity” and “acknowledge and embrace the contributions of all groups within our diverse society...” is aligned to edTPA TASK 1 rubrics focusing on knowledge of all learners in planning for instruction and assessment as well as TASK 2 rubrics focusing on engagement of all learners in a positive, academically challenging learning environment. “Possess knowledge, skills, and dispositions to positively affect change” is associated with edTPA’s strong emphasis on student learning outcomes.

Another educator explained that actions taken to align the program more closely to edTPA may be due to some inconsistencies in faculty understanding/lack of understanding in scoring and giving teacher candidates feedback, saying,

I think there is an ongoing attempt to get it as aligned as we can. When I mentioned the discussions this summer, I think those came about because some thought that there was

not good alignment, or that there wasn't enough consistency...I think one of the issues was that there was not enough consistency in the feedback, the quality of the feedback that was given to students when they submitted practice run throughs or what have you. (Interviewee 3)

This educator alluded to the fact that there were some faculty who had more knowledge of edTPA constructs and rubrics which led to inconsistencies in evaluating students' practice assignments. Educators aimed to provide stronger program alignment hoping to alleviate the problem.

Providing workshop support outside of coursework to increase candidate success on the edTPA. Confirming the large responsibility placed upon the edTPA coordinator as facilitator of the program workshops and as a course instructor, a teacher educator explained how the workshops are set up, saying,

It is actually like an outside of course. We have Block meetings. So, these Block meetings are for whatever the Block might need. We've always had Block meetings, but now the edTPA is a part of Block meetings. So, um, we have videoing, and how to video and download, and we added that to one of the Block meetings. We have, um, getting to know the TASKS Block meetings. And so, these things are outside of the course, but they are part of the program. They happen during the Practicum days leading to Student Teaching. And, there are edTPA days for writing during Student Teaching. It's the edTPA coordinator (who leads), but she teaches a course, too. (Interviewee 1)

The teacher educator explained how the block workshops were designed outside of coursework, prior to student teaching, to give teacher candidates opportunities to understand edTPA TASKS of planning, instruction, and assessment in literacy, as well as, assessing mathematics learning.

Appendix H – Document Review – Program Workshops provides a list and description of workshops. The educator indicated that the workshops provided an overview of edTPA constructs and also served to assist teacher candidates with the logistics of completing an edTPA, such as video-recording literacy lessons and reflecting on the evidence through an analytical writing component. For instance, the video note page and video note-taking workshop

(Document Review, 3j and 3k) provide evidence of the opportunities offered for candidates to practice TASK 2, the instruction task as mentioned by the teacher educator, in Block 2 and 3 workshops. I will discuss the *Program Block and Field Structure* in Table 7 to provide understanding of where the workshops take place in the program.

Table 7

Program Block and Field Structure

Block	School Placement Context and Description
1	Grades PreK- 2 Placement I – PreK or K and Placement II – 1 st or 2 nd grade Teacher candidates work in pairs and swap grade levels with their partner. Teacher candidates attend 2 full days per week for 15 weeks.
2	Grades 3-5 Teacher candidates attend 2 full days per week for 15 weeks.
3	Yearlong; three full days per week Teacher candidates choose the grade level they prefer, grades 1-3 or grades 3-5. Teacher candidates attend 3 full days per week for 15 weeks.
4	Yearlong Internship or Student Teaching A continuation from Block 3 school placement. Teacher candidates attend 5 full days per week for 15 weeks.

Source: Interviewee 2.1

Most of the workshops are offered for teacher candidates during blocks 2 and 3 where the candidates have opportunities to practice in field experiences, two to three full days per week, prior to student teaching every day. During block 1, teacher candidates are introduced to the new lesson plan format inclusive of edTPA components. During block 4, teacher candidates are required to submit the edTPA for consequence. Additionally, during block 4, teacher candidates are afforded support through the offering of “writing days,” where they leave their field placement to return to campus to write their edTPAs across four full days. To prepare teacher candidates for understanding all TASKS in completing an edTPA, teacher educators indicated that the workshops are needed to explain the details of the assignment. Using an *Overview of TASKS PowerPoint*, the edTPA coordinator provides candidates with an online resource to get

acquainted with the TASKS. Additionally, the edTPA coordinator assists candidates in compiling a *Notebook Resource* of all needed edTPA resources, and offers the candidates “Writing Days” to come to campus to write their edTPAs, (Document Review, 3l, 3m, and 3n, and wiki document, 3p).

A teacher educator explained the intent of the Overview of TASKS PowerPoint explaining that by providing it as an electronic resource, the teacher candidates could view it in advance of the workshop and come to the workshop with questions. He/she explained that using this new practice, the edTPA coordinator could collect common questions from candidates to create new resources, such as question and answer documents and video clips explaining the tasks. The educator commented, saying,

And, the interns are asked to review the power points before the writing days and then bring questions to the writing day or send them to [the edTPA coordinator] in an email. This semester, [the edTPA coordinator] is keeping a list of questions and answers and plans to create a Q&A file with common questions to post for the interns. [The edTPA coordinator] hopes to create some YouTube videos breaking the tasks down into smaller parts. You know, if you are struggling in trying to figure out what assessment you should use, you might want to watch this five-minute YouTube. (Interviewee 2)

Additionally, the educator provided a detailed account of what a full-day workshop might look like for candidates as they created their *Notebook Resource* and began understanding the mathematics task, saying,

So, [the edTPA coordinator] pulls the Block 3s after they finished the third block, after they finished placement for an all-day seminar, 9:00 – 4:00 where [they] create the notebooks and we always start with Task 4. It is easier for them to start there and then to have time to work on their learning segment. So, [they] spend that day organizing notebooks, looking at examples of Task 4 that others have done. They see a good one. They see an okay one, but they don’t see the whole thing. They see, here is a prompt. Did they answer that question? What could they have done differently to make sure that they had answered that prompt? (Interviewee 2)

In addition to programmatic workshops designed to assist the candidate in understanding the edTPA components, an educator shared that the workshops are also instructional. He/she

described a Block 2 workshop assignment, the *Learning Segment and Planning Commentary Assignment*, as one that provides the candidate with practice in instructional planning, TASK 1 (Document Review, 3i), saying,

So now [the edTPA coordinator] pulls in the Block 2s after they've finished field placement...brings them in and [they] do an all-day session. [The edTPA coordinator] shows them examples of a learning segment. [The edTPA coordinator] talks about what is involved, and then they get into small groups and they write one. They type it and email it. Then [the edTPA coordinator] gives feedback. It probably takes four or five weeks of reading through them and giving feedback. But, this gives the students some experience writing three consecutive lessons with some feedback. (Interviewee 2)

Additionally, the learning segments serve as a resource for candidates in later semesters as was noted, "Then we put all of those activities on a Google Drive. They all received access to it so they would have that to use in future classes and that kinda stuff" (Interviewee 2.1). Finally, the educator provided additional details making the connection between edTPA and the focus on writing sequenced lesson plans in the literacy learning segment, saying,

Yes, they write it that day, and if they don't quite finish, they can get together, the small group and finish it, then send it to [the edTPA coordinator]. [They're] here from 9:00 – 4:00, all day. [The edTPA coordinator] gives them a lunch break and they pick a standard based on the grade level that they just finished in their Practicum, something they're familiar with. They work in groups by grade levels. Many pick an easy standard, one that they have had experience with. And, that is fine. Learning how to sequence and create lessons that build on each other. ...learning what [to] do the first day and the second day, etc. Our students mainly teach individual lessons and some practice writing sequence lessons. (Interviewee 2)

This educator noted a positive outcome regarding the effectiveness of the assignment from the candidates' perception of it, saying, "Interns who have received their scores feel that the practice learning segment in Block 2 really helped them get through edTPA" (Interviewee 2).

This participant also described the program workshop as a place where differentiation, an area of need for teacher candidates, is emphasized and misconceptions developed in coursework or in field experiences are clarified, saying,

We have put more emphasis on differentiation, but it has been done in seminar more than coursework. Differentiation...everyone has a different philosophy or perspective of it and what it is, and so it has been hard to get people to look at it the same way that edTPA looks at it. You know, breaking it down to specific groups and the accommodations or modifications for students in this class. It's not just general statements. We've got to move away from that, but we've still have some instructors who teach – you plan for your high group, your middle group, and your low group... Some of our cooperating teachers do not model differentiation or tell students to write “work with a parapro”. So, when we read their lesson plans, we talk and ask,” what did you do to help this one kid in this lesson to make that connection?” Many just teach to the average kid and assign extra work to the gifted or place them with a lower level students to work with. That's what I'm seeing with our students. That's not differentiation. (Interviewee 2)

The teacher educator indicated that some topics, such as differentiation, were covered more explicitly in workshops to assist teacher-candidate understanding in areas where they struggled.

Finally, another teacher educator explained how the “Writing Days” were developed as an added support for teacher candidates to learn about each of the edTPA writing prompts found in the commentaries and to provide time for them to write their edTPAs, saying,

The challenge has been navigating the writing days—at first, they were called boot camps where we focused on understanding the handbooks, helping our students understand the handbooks, the parameters for the responses, really understanding the prompt. We did a deep dive into that. While we have tried to put some of that into courses and course work, we have relied heavily on what we now call writing days. (Interviewee 4)

The teacher educator explained that workshops were previously called boot camps, offered during the blocks prior to student teaching, and the writing days occur during student teaching or internship, when the candidates are completing edTPA. This educator shared a current dilemma with “Writing Days” regarding challenges faced in finding the right time to bring candidates to campus, remarking,

The writing days start in internship— where we bring them out of the field into a seminar kind of format where they—they bring their information, they can ask technical questions and things that we can answer, but the focus is on them writing and responding to the prompts. That's just been a real challenge to balance that with their being out of the field. How do we navigate that, especially spring semester with the spring breaks, and their full-time teaching weeks in the field? (Interviewee 4)

The educator commented on the challenge experienced by educators in providing time for candidates to write their edTPAs, while maintaining adequate time for them to work with children and the teacher during student teaching.

Using data to improve candidate performance on the course. In addition to making changes in personal practice, changes within coursework and outside of coursework, teacher educators made decisions at the program level based upon their interpretation of edTPA data and their review of teacher candidate work samples. Teacher educators spoke about the more intentional use of data for program change. One educator commented on the specificity of the edTPA rubrics as useful in knowing what and where the change is needed, saying,

Oh, yes. Most definitely. We get the results. They see which areas are the weak areas, so that has to impact program change. If you see that they're not good at—they can't write, then you up the writing game, give them a little bit more structure on that. You see the data that comes in and talks about how the assessment piece is the one that is lacking the most, and which indicator, and which of the 18—what are those things called? Rubrics. Yeah, which rubric is needed the most. I do think that that does inform the program very nicely. It's more specific. Yeah. It was just very generic before, but this is—you can actually look at the rubric and see what is expected in that rubric. You can fit your curriculum needs to the needs of the students, overall, in the overall program. Whereas, I don't think that was looked at before. (Interviewee 6)

The educator explained that prior to edTPA, rubric data provided educators with general rather than specific information which is more useful for making explicit changes in teacher preparation aimed at improvement of candidate performance.

Confirming this to be the case, I was given access to institutional assessment results found in two different kinds of documents, the *ECE BSED Assessment Results* (Document Review – 3q) and the *edTPA Institutional Data Analysis* (Document Review – 3t). Both documents provided teacher educators with information pertaining to candidate performance on key assessments, including the case studies and edTPA. Noted in the *ECE BSED Assessment Results*, I found that the Literacy Learning Segment (LIT 3262), and Context for learning,

“Knowledge of Students,” was identified as the lowest scoring element. Data results for the Literacy Case Study (LIT 4250) - Feedback to Guide Further Learning, including an explanation for how the analysis guided instruction as well as citations of research and/or theory to support decision-making, was noted as another low scoring element. Both key assessments were aligned to edTPA constructs. Additionally, the *edTPA Institutional Data Analysis* for 2016 and 2017 show strong alignment to edTPA constructs by presenting program mean scores on edTPA in comparison to state highest and lowest averages. Teacher educators are afforded guiding questions for program consideration of their strengths, needs, and potential course activities that might address areas for improvement. Teacher educators are also provided information on condition codes (i.e., reasons for why edTPA tasks are not scorable), rules for submission, and procedures for candidates’ access to vouchers.

Another educator verified how data were used for understanding program strengths and needs and for program improvement, replying,

We look at the rubric scores. Then, individually, the program faculty with edTPA coordinator chooses certain portfolios to go in TK20 read responses after they are scored. Who scored a 4 on rubric 13? Who scored a 3 on rubric 13? Who scored a one or a two? (Interviewee 4)

This educator also provided a specific program example of data use, saying,

Then, again, began to go back to the program and look to see where are we really focusing on “student use of feedback” or how the candidate is using student feedback. That was one that was evident pretty early that we might need to provide more opportunities to help our students grow in that area prior to internship when they actually implement the edTPA. (Interviewee 4)

The educator elaborated to name a specific edTPA construct, “student use of feedback,” targeting edTPA rubric 13, as an area where program faculty might consider providing additional learning opportunities for their teacher candidates.

Providing another perspective, an educator confirmed how the process for sharing and using data works on their “closing the loop” day, remarking that teacher educators are presented their program reports, and faculty identify areas of program strength and weakness, saying,

So, then [the Field Director’s] office also receives the reports and then distributes them to the various programs. And, then she will meet with the various program coordinators and discuss say hey, you were really strong here and weak in assessment, what have you, and make plans for the future. So, it’s a continuous process. We call it closing the loop, and we’ll have a college-wide day each year, a closing the loop day, where we’ll look...all of the college will meet. It’s after classes are over. The programs will meet. The Dean will offer encouraging words. You know, we’ll have a few announcements and lunch, and then the programs will break up and look at their data and decide, in programs, how we’re going to meet whatever we find in the data. So, we go through this process once each year. (Interviewee 3)

Finally, another respondent considered the effects of edTPA data on program renewal and replied, saying,

I think that the effects are just helping us be more intentional in our program improvement, our analysis and program improvement, which is a good thing. It is providing us with another source of really good data to know how our candidates are being prepared. Now, we are able to compare to national ranking and that is confirming, I guess, that we're right up there and we're doing well. That's a very positive effect. (Interviewee 4)

My document analysis (Document Review – 3t) indicated that the clear majority of the program’s teacher candidates were passing edTPA. As was indicated by the interviewees, by seeing edTPA results, teacher educators have been assured that their efforts have been effective, thus leading to intentionality aimed at program improvement.

Navigating Through Unexpected Changes on the Course: Change at the College Level

As teacher educators created a challenging pathway for the successful preparation of their teacher candidates, they experienced unexpected changes at the college level similar to issues teachers face in the enactment of challenging curriculum, visualized as a playground obstacle course, affected by school change. Teacher educators commented on changes made to reorganize

departments that proved to add challenge to edTPA implementation and collaboration of faculty, while the creation of an infrastructure at the college level acted as a support for teacher candidates. Both unexpected changes influenced edTPA implementation for the teacher educators and for the teacher candidates.

Adding to the challenge: Impact of departmental reorganization on teacher educators. In the last year, due to the large size of some departments, the college reorganized from four departments to six departments. As a result, the Department of Early Childhood Education merged with Secondary Education, and Literacy and Special Education were joined as one department. Previously, Early Childhood, Literacy, and Special Education had been in the same department. This unexpected change resulted in an added challenge for the literacy and early childhood program educators. As the literacy faculty resided in the Literacy and Special Education service department for the Early Childhood Education program, the teacher educators from both departments were left to negotiate the content and edTPA responsibility of the LIT – literacy methods courses. Teacher educators shared mixed perspectives regarding course alignment to the university writing initiative, considering an analytical approach to writing and preparation for edTPA or a creative approach to writing. Additionally, faculty were challenged in identifying which course(s) to embed two edTPA signature assignments which were focused on analytical writing. Faculty workload was also a factor to consider as the writing courses were typically taught by literacy faculty who had varied levels of understanding and/or training for scoring the edTPA assignments. A couple of educators noted the dilemma, saying,

So, I have had to um, have had discussions, you know, across departments about desired signature assignments and you know...your department owns the course, but it is our program, and you know can we agree on a signature assignment or not, because the signature assignments are labor intensive because of the emphasis on writing. StateU has an emphasis on writing anyway, because of our QEP. But that was with all of the writing

intensive aspects, it was like, well...this is how we are going to emphasize writing in our program. (Interviewee 1)

This educator explained that the instructors from both departments needed time for discussions to negotiate the signature assignment and to consider the university writing initiative to best serve the program candidates who were taking the literacy course. Additionally, another educator agreed that since the department reorganization, the TASK 1 edTPA signature assignment was removed from a literacy course offered by the literacy faculty, saying,

... at one time like a year or two ago, and it is [LIT] 3263. Um, but through the discussions this summer, they pulled that piece out, and I don't know where it is located now. But it was, I believe, Task 1 - understanding your students – the planning, the practice, and the assessment piece. But, one of those pieces...I don't think it was getting them what they wanted, so they realigned that. (Interviewee 3)

This educator also indicated that there was some concern about how the course should be offered, considering the edTPA signature assignment. Sharing that department reorganization influenced program change, a third educator commented, saying,

We were in the process of rewriting those [the vision and mission statements] and updating because our department changed in the fall to include early childhood and secondary programs. Before we were early childhood, literacy and special education. Program renewal and department changes made people think a little deeper. (Interviewee 2)

Supporting the challenge: Creating infrastructure support for candidates. Educators commented on changes made to create an infrastructure at the college level for faculty and teacher candidates, supporting edTPA implementation and resolving concerns from partner schools. For example, one educator described the support provided for candidates by college personnel in uploading their edTPA portfolios for external scoring, saying,

Okay, so we have a point person, XXXX, who is the director of our Office of Field Experience. Um, when they get to their senior level, they pay an edTPA fee which basically purchases their vouchers. [The point person] tracks all of that. She purchases the vouchers. She is the one who actually distributes them to the students. We have days set up in our computer labs. She'll check in with our program coordinators, say XXXX,

okay, let's set a date and students are not required to do it that way, but we encourage them to do it in case they run into any technical problems. So, she and others will man the computer labs and so the kids will come on those dates to submit their portfolios, and they'll be assisted, if needed. Not all of them need it. A lot of them can do it on their own what have you, but it is there as a service if they need it. (Interviewee 3)

Support was also provided at the college level by administrators who prepared data reports (see Document Review – 3t edTPA Institutional Data Analysis) for program assessment leaders to share with programs for analysis, as one teacher educator indicated, saying,

College administrators have a data meetings 3-4 times each semester with our program assessment leaders, called PALS, and our program coordinators and our edTPA coordinator. The edTPA data reports are distributed, and they present the averages across their program. Then, at this last meeting, we looked at it by semester, so starting with fall '15, spring '16, fall '16, we analyzed it in December looking at the trends for three semesters now, looking at each rubric. Are we going up, down, staying the same? Where are we seeing improvement? Looking at our average rubric scores as well as our overall composite scores. (Interviewee 4)

This participant also shared how the college administrators communicated information to teachers and principals at their school sites, remarking,

... the director of Field Experience and [a college administrator] have been out to several of our schools and held workshops with the teachers to give an overview of edTPA. The focus was helping them understand more the big picture of what this is all about, not just the videoing and the lesson, teaching the lesson, but looking at the whole process. Then, of course, [they] always share our data, how our students are performing, with our cooperating teachers and administrators at the schools. [They've] shared that so they can feel confident and just be more of a partner. This past fall, just this recently, fall '16, they went out to as many schools that could schedule us, and that had a large number of our interns. (Interviewee 4)

The educator shared how college administrators shared edTPA data with teachers and principals to provide information about how the candidates were performing, to increase their confidence as partners, and to increase their knowledge of edTPA constructs. My document review of the PowerPoint used at the fall meeting provided evidence of the information described (Document Review, 3u. *edTPA Partner Schools PowerPoint*). Furthermore, the presentation of the information on edTPA was intended to also alleviate teachers' concerns about the large amount

of time that teacher candidates were pulled from the field to write up their edTPAs, during “Writing Days” on campus. The administrators provided a comprehensive overview highlighting the following big ideas about edTPA: defined it as a teacher performance assessment; described its purpose in identifying learner ready teachers; named the developers, described the scoring process; identified participating states; emphasized its focus on student learning, described it as a collection of multiple pieces of evidence from candidates; explained its educative intent; described the content of edTPA, focusing on the TASKS, academic language, and the rubric criteria. Finally, the administrators provided visual images to explain the teacher’s role including types of acceptable and unacceptable support. They provided an analysis of candidate performance as a summary and noting the areas for focus which were analysis of teaching effectiveness, student use of feedback, analyzing students’ language use, and using data to reflect on teaching. By providing an overview of edTPA and areas of focus, teacher educators were hopeful that the teachers would become more supportive of their teacher candidates, during edTPA implementation.

Continuous Progress on the Obstacle Course Leading to Program Reform

Considering the obstacle course, a challenging pathway toward a goal, teacher educators have embarked upon a thought provoking journey in their perception of edTPA, resulting in subsequent actions leading to program change and renewal. Change occurred in teacher educators’ personal practice, in their courses, in program workshops, and in department reorganization and infrastructure development at the college level.

At least four teacher educators made changes in their personal practice saying they were more intentional in their teaching. They named the inclusion of academic language in their assignments as well as research-based strategies aligned to edTPA constructs. Additionally, they

made improvements to course rubrics and prompted teacher candidates to be reflective practitioners. One educator indicated the he/she increased efforts to collaborate with other instructors by co-teaching to integrate literacy across the content areas.

At the course level teacher educators made modifications to assignments, created new assignments, and were in the process of proposing a course change. Both case studies completed by teacher candidates, which were key assignments in literacy and mathematics, were modified to incorporate prompts aimed at teacher educators' reflection on their practice and using data analysis to determine next steps for instruction. Teacher educators created new assignments in literacy focused on planning for instruction and assessment via a new lesson plan template. Additionally, an emphasis on assessment through a whole class analysis of data sets was noted in the development of new assignments in literacy and mathematics. Finally, teacher educators indicated that an upper division mathematics course was in the process of course change for a focus on data analysis and closer alignment to the Common Core in mathematics at the elementary level and to edTPA constructs.

At the program level, I noted educators' attempts at aligning the program to edTPA, including key phrases from the vision and mission statement as aligned to edTPA rubric or component language. Recognizing the huge role played by the edTPA coordinator, I found numerous developments in the form of workshops required of teacher candidates and facilitated by the coordinator outside of their coursework. The coordinator designed workshops to provide support for teacher candidates to understand the edTPA TASKS, to access and organize numerous resources, and to provide opportunities for practice of edTPA TASKS in blocks prior to the consequential semester of edTPA completion. Finally, the edTPA coordinator led workshops during the final student teaching/internship semester to assist the candidates with time

management in writing up edTPA. I learned that this opportunity required candidates to leave their field placement for four days, presenting concerns for the host teachers and placing stress from the field on the candidates. Additionally, teacher educators shared lessons learned from their more intentional use of data for program improvement. They indicated that edTPA provided good data due to the specificity of the rubrics, and they identified specific areas, such as “analyzing teaching effectiveness,” “student use of feedback,” “academic language use,” and “using assessment data to reflect on teaching” where candidate improvement was needed. By responding to the guiding questions on the college-level data reports, teacher educators developed a deeper understanding of their program strengths and needs.

Finally, change occurred at the college level as administrators reorganized the structure of the departments and developed an infrastructure to support edTPA implementation for teacher candidates. The first change created an unexpected challenge, when the literacy faculty became part of a new department separated from the department with the early childhood program faculty. Desiring to maintain control of their program and align the edTPA analytical writing component to the university writing initiative, teacher educators engaged in discussions to resolve tensions about the edTPA signature assignments and where and how they would continue to be offered. The second change proved to be supportive of both teacher educators and teacher candidates. College administrators provided technical assistance for the candidates during the edTPA upload submission process for external scoring. They also created the program edTPA data reports and scheduled meetings to share information about edTPA and the data with program representatives. Recognizing concerns from cooperating teachers and principals regarding their lack of understanding of edTPA and how to support candidates as well as

concerns about candidates' time out of field, college administrators also met at the school sites with the school representatives to address all the issues, supporting both faculty and candidates.

In chapter 5, I will summarize my interpretation of the results by: (a) considering a metaphorical response in comparison to the programmatic response; and, (b) noting lessons learned from the educators regarding how to act responsively to avoid pitfalls and to sustain the edTPA initiative with department and college supports for continuous improvement.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

As an elementary school playground is comprised of many kinds of equipment designed for different purposes and chosen by educators for specific grade bands... the elementary education program is designed to assess and to support the learning of teacher candidates in a safe environment with opportunities for them to: practice teaching, develop metacognitive strategies, and construct knowledge with influential others for their own growth and development.

An **elementary school playground** is comprised of many kinds of equipment designed for different purposes and chosen by educators for specific grade bands. Considering the age, developmental readiness, and safety of the pre-kindergarten to fifth-grade pupils, an elementary playground may include structures such as swings, see-saws, playground systems, and an obstacle course(s). Swings are set at an appropriate height and distance for movement based on the age of the child and location on the playground. The push and pull movement required in using a swing gives young children the opportunity to develop gross motor strength in their upper and lower body extremities. They must sense the amount of force that it takes to move forward and to react to the change in speed to move backward.

A see saw requires an up and down motion that enables a young child to develop coordination in working with a partner. Each person's involvement on the see-saw maintains its balance and the rhythm of the motion. For the see-saw to work, each person must participate so that the other person will not be thrown off. Each person is a contributing player in making the see-saw work properly.

A playground system is comprised of many units, created for specific ages, and inclusive of items such as slides, monkey bars, and climbing apparatuses. The integrated units are designed to developmentally support the physical abilities of children to help them progress in developing strength, coordination, and large muscle skills. Each unit is created for young

learners to develop specific skills as they are afforded different levels of practice and choice in selecting from various activities based upon their self-assessment of their readiness.

Finally, an obstacle course is an added structure on the playground that supports the physical development of children; but also, it adds another element in that it challenges the young child to progress to the end of the sequenced pathway by mastering each obstacle or challenge along the way. Children develop determination, perseverance, confidence, and physical and cognitive ability to accomplish all the tasks on an obstacle course. Each task may become increasingly difficult as the learner progresses from one task to the next. As children are successful, the rewarding experience lends itself to their desire to do it again, improving their performance.

Considering all the structures on the playground, teacher provide young learners many opportunities, in a developmentally appropriate and social environment. They are afforded opportunities to practice and to develop knowledge and skills, achieving a sense of satisfaction, growth, and development, while enjoying and learning from the experience with others.

Likewise, the *elementary education program*, in my case study, was designed by teacher educators to assess and to support the learning of teacher candidates in a supportive environment with opportunities for them to: practice teaching, develop metacognitive strategies, and construct knowledge with influential others for their own growth and development. The program was aimed at providing an appropriate, meaningful, and equitable education for the candidates and, subsequently, the pupils they will serve. With the added accountability measure placed upon their teacher candidates for certification, we learn from my study how teacher educators perceived edTPA and how they acted in response to it. To support the learning of their teacher candidates, teacher educators considered what they wanted their candidates to know and do.

While wrestling with their perceptions of edTPA, they considered the alignment of their vision and mission statement to course and program goals, to subsequent learning outcomes, and to edTPA as a measure mandated for assessing teaching readiness in their state. By understanding the educators' perceptions and actions as a program response to edTPA, my study is informative for other program educators, especially those in high-stakes contexts, who may adopt a teacher performance assessment. My study provides strategies for teacher educators to act responsively, while under a mandate, to avoid pitfalls and to sustain support for their candidates, while aiming for continuous program improvement.

Making Sense of Teacher Educators' Perceptions of edTPA and Subsequent Actions

Teacher educators in my study wrestled in making sense of their perceptions of edTPA: (a) as a measure of teaching effectiveness (swinging back and forth), (b) as an initiative that might threaten their autonomy over the profession, influence their roles/courses, and bring consequences for themselves and their teacher candidates, thus affecting their level of engagement (finding the balance on the see-saw); and finally, (c) as an assessment that might affect teacher candidate development and learning in a high-stakes context (supporting the novice). By examining teacher educators' experiences with edTPA from its onset, I was able to understand their perceptions as associated with these factors which resulted in actionable responses regarding their level of engagement, implementation strategies in support of teacher candidate development and learning, and programmatic and curriculum changes (pursuing the obstacle course) in response to the mandate.

Swinging Back and Forth: Teacher Educators' Perceptions of edTPA as a Measure of Teaching Effectiveness

Considering edTPA's validity and use as a measurement tool for teacher candidate readiness for the profession, teacher educators wrestled with the tensions they experienced, much like using a swing. Projecting forward, they understood the benefits of edTPA, its constructs, which were big ideas that the educators perceived as important for developing teachers. They valued edTPA's emphasis on critical thinking, data analysis, reflection, and analytical writing. Additionally, teacher educators agreed that teacher preparation should prepare candidates to analyze data based on authentic evidence as was required of the assessment. Preparing candidates with opportunities, in authentic settings, to engage in a planning-teaching-assessing-reflecting cycle aimed at student learning, teacher educators in this study unanimously agreed that candidate engagement in the cycle was a critical component in teacher preparation. In fact, they agreed that edTPA constructs were a step in professionalizing the teaching force as advocated by other education reformers (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Johnson, 2009; Wei & Pecheone, 2010).

Despite their positive perceptions and trajectory forward, they held hesitations in their consideration of the liabilities, questioning edTPA's reliability, fairness, and role as gatekeeper. Several teacher educators either lacked knowledge of the scoring procedures, questioning changes in the scoring based upon program data from two years in a row, or they considered other factors that might jeopardize reliability in scoring, such as expertise and effort. Furthermore, they argued that school placement/class context, program type, and lack of choice in content as factors that created inequity for candidates during completion of edTPA as well as judgment of candidate performance.

Finally, some teacher educators indicated disagreement with the external edTPA scores, although their candidates were performing well, questioning edTPA as a filter/gatekeeper for teaching readiness, also noted by other researchers (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). They identified unintended factors for success, such as strong writing ability, support from peers, and online services. Additionally, they mentioned unintended factors for lack of success, such as life issues and valuable intangibles such as dispositions that they believed were not counted. Swinging backward, teacher educators had a difficult time making up their minds about their overall perception of the assessment as a measurement tool. Other scholars have explained why teacher educators resist the standardized teacher performance assessment initiative, expressing their concerns regarding the body of knowledge espoused in edTPA and who determines what is important (Dover & Schultz, 2016; Greenblat & O'Hara, 2015; Tucker & Gorlewski, 2016).

Miller, Carroll, Jancic, and Markworth (2015) explain similar challenges faced by teacher educators, while preparing their candidates for edTPA. While teacher educators may value the big ideas of “ambitious teaching,” including those aligned with edTPA, such as deeper learning and problem solving embedded in subject-specific pedagogies, they may become distracted from their focus on overall program goals (Miller et al., 2015, p. 38). By preparing teacher candidates for edTPA, simultaneously, teacher educators may be challenged with embedding edTPA constructs throughout a program of study aimed at continuous learning rather than left for mastery at the program endpoint (Miller et al.).

Finding the Balance on the See-saw: Understanding What Affects Teacher Educator Engagement with edTPA Implementation

Leaving the swing for the see-saw, teacher educators simultaneously were considering the merit of edTPA based on other factors (e.g., autonomy, consequences for themselves and

candidates). Their perceptions were mixed and resulted in responses of resistance (no engagement), compliance (minimal engagement, responding to consequences) and/or inquiry (full engagement, learning more). Regarding their level of autonomy or control in making decisions in the preparation of their teacher candidates, some teacher educators jumped off the see-saw, resisting the edTPA initiative, considering it a threat to their professional autonomy and program identity. Educators choosing compliance in response to edTPA, paused the motion of the see-saw, to consider who was involved in the policy decision and to weigh the consequences for themselves and, their candidates, program, and institution. Considering the high-stakes consequences, the educators decided that it was in the best interest of all involved to comply by supporting the preparation of their candidates for edTPA success and also to maintain faculty and program reputation. Researchers have noted similar responses from teacher educators, noting their compliance rather than inquiry (Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Ruddell, 2007), as well as their reactions to a mandate based on stages of concern when considering the consequences for candidates, themselves, and their program (Many et al., 2016; Qian, Fayne, & Lieman, in press).

Similarly, when program faculty recognized that their role (e.g., as a course instructor), did not include edTPA involvement, for example due to the required content area or the lack of signature assignments embedded in their courses, these members chose to resist the initiative and get off the see-saw. With fewer members participating on the see-saw, teacher educators were left with unresolved issues and much responsibility was left to the edTPA coordinator and to the literacy and mathematics course instructors. For example, the social studies and science instructors, who were involved in the exploration phase as reported by the literacy and mathematics faculty, disengaged in the initiative during the consequential years, since literacy and mathematics were the required content areas identified in the mandate. As a result, co-

teaching among educators for literacy integration across the content areas was constrained. Furthermore, even one faculty member's strong desire for collaborative inquiry to integrate literacy in the content areas, in order to keep the see-saw moving, was not sustainable due to others' indifference toward the initiative. This member's participation ended for unexpected reasons and literacy integration in the program, as thoughtfully considered, ceased to occur.

Additionally, as program faculty were assigned to teach other courses (e.g., graduate courses) or did not return to the program, their knowledge and expertise was no longer available to other faculty or to undergraduate teacher candidates in the program. With inconsistent involvement of all program educators as well as inconsistent professional development provided for them, the sustainability of the initiative was left to a few educators, which generated more challenge for some, especially the edTPA coordinator. Teacher performance assessments may be a valuable resource for program faculty, particularly when all are engaged in opportunities to understand teacher candidate work and to network with an aim to learn together (Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014).

Finally, with department reorganization at the college level, program ownership of edTPA had an impact on who taught the literacy courses and whether edTPA constructs were an area of focus or not. Disagreeing on how the courses should be offered and who should teach them, early childhood education program faculty were in the process of taking ownership of the literacy courses. By doing so, literacy faculty who were initially involved and had some knowledge of edTPA were no longer assigned to the courses. Meanwhile, teacher educators removed some of edTPA tasks, originally embedded in literacy coursework, into workshops outside of coursework and assigned the responsibility to the edTPA coordinator. Creating somewhat of an imbalance in the distribution of the assignments (e.g. TASK 1 and 2 planning

and instruction components) inside and outside of coursework, fewer educators remained engaged in the initiative.

Supporting the Novice: Perceptions of Novice Teacher Development and Learning with edTPA Expectations

Teacher educators' perspectives of their teacher candidates as novices influenced their perceptions of edTPA expectations in juxtaposition with factors that affect teacher development and learning. For example, they questioned whether the assessment was a developmentally appropriate measure of their undergraduate preservice teachers' knowledge and performance much like a teacher would analyze a playground system and all its structures to ensure that it was developmentally appropriate for the use of young children. Since teacher performance assessments have been used for national certification with in-service teachers, some educators wondered if the expectations were too high for preservice novices. Similar concerns have been previously noted in the literature (Lit & Lotan, 2013; Margolis & Doring, 2013). Teacher educators also considered novice teacher developmental characteristics and analytic abilities. With critical thinking, analysis, and reflection required of candidates completing the assessment, some educators and cooperating teachers perceived the assessment as too advanced, while others viewed it as a step in the right direction for teacher preparation. Additionally, teacher educators were concerned about the restrictions placed on the kinds of feedback (Lachuk & Koellner, 2015; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; Ratner & Kolman, 2016) that could be provided for novices completing edTPA. Since novices need ongoing feedback from influential others, while they are growing and developing knowledge and skills (Vygotsky, 1978), the educators expressed concern about the high-stakes measure and the anxiety experienced by their candidates. Also, teacher educators recognized another potentially limiting factor; that is, the literacy demands

placed upon novice teachers to show their effectiveness. Considering the assessment design, teacher educators questioned whether their teacher candidates could respond to analytical writing demands required in the large number of prompts on edTPA, while completing other student teacher responsibilities. They also had concern for candidate comprehension of the prompting questions as phrased on the assessment. Noting teacher candidates' needs to negotiate edTPA implementation in their teacher's class setting, teacher educators raised additional concerns about the oral literacy demands required of the novice teacher. Finally, teacher educators expressed their displeasure with the inhibiting factor of stress, namely the financial cost of edTPA, placed upon candidates already challenged with student teaching responsibilities and life issues.

As a result, teacher educators developed educative strategies to promote candidates' conceptual understanding of the edTPA constructs to improve the preparation of their candidates and to support their successful completion of edTPA during clinical practice. Some teacher educators made it clear they were not teaching to the test, instead, they considered ways to support candidates in ways aligned with their beliefs about teaching and learning. One teacher educator summarized their approach by saying, "...[I] try to make the assessment the background not the foreground" (Interviewee 5). Teacher educators recognized the criticalness of providing opportunities for candidates to learn how to get to know their learners, especially for planning purposes and in consideration of differentiated instruction, which is a task often difficult for novices. Teacher educators also added supports focused on assessment, another high-need area for novices. While developing the novice teacher's understanding of the edTPA's academic language component, teacher educators determined that novices needed additional support in understanding the curriculum standard(s) they will be teaching. Practice in unpacking the standard for increased understanding, while incorporating academic language, was a newly

added strategy and has been noted as critical by other researchers (Bunch, Aguirre & Tellez, 2009; Liu & Milman, 2013). Using Google and wiki documents, teacher educators sought to decrease anxiety by providing candidates with resources to increase their understanding of the edTPA tasks and to promote their time management.

While educators noticed an improvement in candidate performance, identifying reflection and the use of the planning-teaching-assessing-reflecting cycle as two prominent areas, one educator indicated that change was most observable by those working closely with candidates. Other researchers have noted that when teacher candidates engage in TPA teaching events, they demonstrate reflection capabilities as novices (Chung, 2008; Okhremtchouk, Newell, & Rosa, 2013). Teacher educators in my study who were involved and knowledgeable about edTPA and who observed positive changes in candidate performance as a result of their support, demonstrated a more positive view of the assessment. Teacher educators also recognized the need to support their novice teachers' completion of edTPA, especially during clinical practice. Educators identified a lack of supports as detrimental to candidate success and program preparation noting how negative attitudes of cooperating teachers transfer to candidates and have an impact on their outlook and learning. Consequently, teacher educators needed to provide knowledge of edTPA and implementation strategies for teachers and administrators in support of their candidates. Similarly, Meuwissin and Choppin (2015) identified "agency tensions" experienced by teacher candidates and the need for teacher educators to assist in negotiations (p. 3). Additionally, teacher educators in this study described teacher complaints about teacher-candidate time away from placements in order to write up their edTPAs. Likewise, Okhremtchouk, et al. (2009) noted in their study elementary candidates' concerns about the time it took them to prepare edTPA at the expense of preparing for student teaching. Finally, teacher

educators in this study also described the missed opportunities for school administrators who, with knowledge of edTPA, may have had a positive influence on candidate and induction teacher performance.

Considering the Impact of Teacher Educators' Actions Resulting in Programmatic and Curriculum Change

As described earlier, teacher educators' perceptions led to actions regarding their level of engagement in the mandate (finding the balance on the see-saw) as well as implementation strategies in support of their teacher candidates (supporting the novice). Additionally, their perceptions led to subsequent actions leading to changes in curriculum (pursuing the obstacle course) and overall teacher preparation. By analyzing teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA as a measure of teaching effectiveness, as a valid reason for engagement or not, and in juxtaposition to novice teacher candidate development and learning, I summarized the subsequent impact of the edTPA mandate on teacher educators' actions resulting in curriculum change.

Pursuing the Obstacle Course of Program Reform: Teacher Educators' Actions Resulting in Change

Much like young learners pursuing an obstacle course, teacher candidates embark on a journey through their courses in hopes of successfully completing the program of study with a chance to continue as practicing teachers and as lifelong learners. Likewise, teacher educators were charged with the responsibility for designing an academically rigorous program of study that was inclusive of a body of knowledge for developing elementary-school teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, and dispositions. Teacher educators who valued the body of knowledge promoted in edTPA found it useful for improving their practice

and ultimately their program and candidate success on edTPA. Educators found new ways to change their practice in order to embed opportunities for teacher candidates to analyze their teaching based upon data analysis of student learning. Additionally, educators recognized that by embedding reflection questions in key assignments, they assisted teacher candidate development by providing opportunities for candidates to learn how to reflect *in* and *on* their practice (Schön, 1983), while becoming teachers as *reflective practitioners* (Shulman, 1987). Understanding academic language as a critical component of edTPA, teacher educators wrestled with their definitions of academic language in comparison to how it was defined edTPA. While learning together, teacher educators prepared their candidates to recognize the language demands and instructional supports needed to provide access to the content for all their learners. When considering tensions experienced with specific constructs of edTPA, the teacher educators could move past their concerns, increasing their own knowledge and their candidates' knowledge. Stepping back to reevaluate, teacher educators could successfully move forward, getting beyond the obstacle.

In addition to making substantial changes in their personal practice, teacher educators made changes to course assignments, program workshops and documents, and the college infrastructure. At the course level, I identified course modifications in at least four instances, specifically, reading and mathematics content areas, where course instructors modified both the assignments and the rubrics of their case studies, and they incorporated a new lesson plan format. Furthermore, educators and administrators were in the process of proposing a course change to include a stronger data analysis component in a mathematics course. To ensure for more consistent candidate support, the teacher educators were in the process of aligning the vision and mission statement to edTPA constructs that they deemed important. Additionally, the edTPA

coordinator facilitated many changes outside of coursework in workshops, where the coordination of preparing an edTPA portfolio was explained in support of candidate preparation. The edTPA coordinator facilitated instructional workshops by adding assignments that faculty had removed from coursework, due to tensions between two departments regarding what should be covered and who should be teaching. For example, the edTPA coordinator relocated an intensive planning project to a workshop session. The project may have been more appropriately aligned inside a methods course to promote an even distribution of signature assignments across courses and workshops and to engage more faculty.

Finally, educators intentionally used edTPA data for setting program improvement goals, by referring to specific rubrics where they could see variation in their candidates' strengths and needs. Consistent with the Ledwell and Oyler (2016) inquiry, teacher educators in this study identified level two curriculum changes, focusing on minor curriculum revisions, such as lesson planning/planning lessons in sequence and focusing on assessment practices, and level three curriculum changes, identifying new course curriculum, such as a new lesson plan format, integrating educative strategies/course modifications in methods courses, redesigning seminars/workshops with a primary focus on edTPA, and including edTPA as the culminating/primary assessment in student teaching (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). Other researchers have identified teacher educators' use of teacher performance data as a valuable contribution to program improvement/renewal (Peck & McDonald, 2013; Sloan, 2013, 2015).

At the college level, administrators assisted teacher educators by sharing data reports and by providing infrastructure supports for candidates to upload their edTPA portfolios. Additionally, college administrators addressed school partnership concerns from teachers and principals regarding their need for information on edTPA, for implementation support and for

negotiating time for candidates to leave the field to attend edTPA instructional workshops and writing days. I learned that procedures, such as writing days, intended to support the candidates, proved to be problematic for their cooperating teachers. Similarly, other researchers have indicated that college infrastructure supports are needed to alleviate faculty concerns and to support teacher candidates in the edTPA implementation process (Many et al., 2016). Finally, I learned that program educators faced an unexpected challenge due to department, organizational change occurring across the college. Program educators experienced increased difficulty collaborating across departments, following the reorganization, and were left to determine ownership of a literacy course that was modified to include edTPA writing support for candidates.

Using Proactive Strategies for Acting Responsively and for Avoiding Pitfalls

Making sense of teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA, recognizing some of the obstacles they faced in their program as well as the ways they tried to resolve them, I considered their use/lack of use of proactive strategies for acting responsively and for avoiding pitfalls. Please refer to Figure 3 for the discussion to follow responsive actions to avoid pitfalls.

Acting Responsively

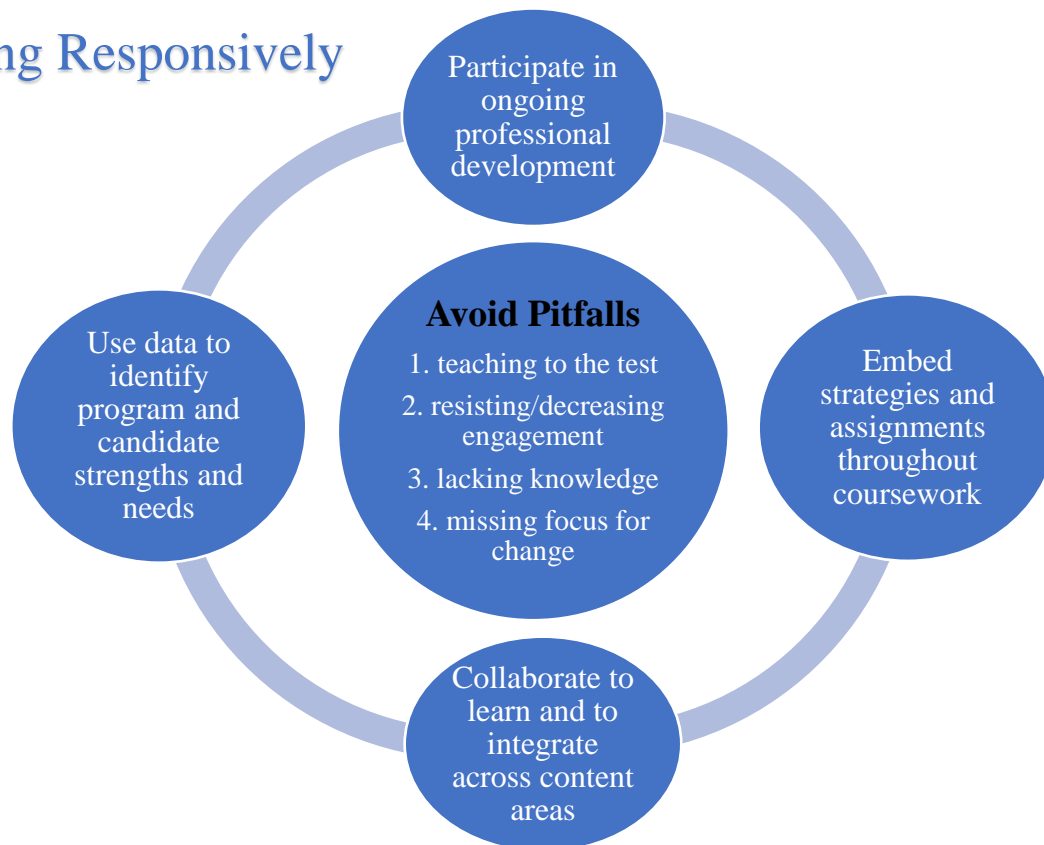


Figure 3. Acting Responsively to Avoid Pitfalls

Participate in On-going Professional Development

Teacher educators who were the most involved in the edTPA initiative shared information about activities that increased their knowledge of edTPA. In some instances, teacher educators engaged in activities that they chose in order to learn more. I learned from educators that they participated in state trainings to learn about academic language and edTPA constructs as well as sessions unpacking the rubrics to understand each component across the proficiency levels. At least two educators participated in external/local evaluation training to learn about edTPA. The edTPA coordinator offered instructional sessions for teacher candidates, and the teacher educators were invited to attend. Since these professional development sessions were optional, I learned that course instructors with a personal stake, who taught literacy and

mathematics, were the most interested in learning more. When teacher educators discovered inconsistencies in scoring teacher candidate work, they tried to resolve issues regarding faculty knowledge and lack of knowledge regarding edTPA. As fewer educators became involved, teacher educators left with the responsibility realized that the program had fewer experts to share the workload. They recognized their need to find ways to sustain the pool of knowledge and ultimately the initiative.

Embed Educative Strategies/Assignments for Program Cohesiveness

When considering perceptions of edTPA as a measure of teaching effectiveness, I learned from the teacher educators how they capitalized on the benefits of edTPA constructs by embedding authentic opportunities in some of the coursework, in workshops, and in authentic school settings. They afforded teacher candidates opportunities to think critically and write analytically, to analyze data, and to reflect on teaching and learning. Additionally, I learned that across the three-year time span, including the exploratory phase and the two years of consequential implementation, teacher educators removed some assignments (i.e., TASKS 1 and 2 planning and analyzing teaching) from coursework. Instead, they offered opportunities to practice in workshops, outside of coursework, which already included instructional practices to prepare teacher candidates for edTPA as facilitated by the edTPA coordinator. As edTPA-aligned activities were added to workshops rather than coursework, again, the edTPA coordinator and a couple of educators were left with most of the responsibility. With this approach, the teacher preparation program assignments appeared like edTPA-prep or teaching to the test outside of coursework, rather than well-integrated, in preparation to complete edTPA. Teacher educators were clear that they insisted that they not teach to the test, but this practice resulted in a potential pitfall. Additionally, these practices placed added pressure on the edTPA

coordinator as well as the program literacy and mathematics instructors. Fewer teacher educators were involved in candidate preparation as assignments were removed from their courses. Similarly, others have indicated that teacher educators can avoid this type of response by intentionally integrating edTPA constructs across coursework, developing a strong knowledge-base, engaging multiple course instructors, and promoting educative experiences for candidates throughout the program (Miller, et al., 2015; Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016; Whittaker & Nelson, 2013).

Finally, I learned from the educators that they provided opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in authentic school-based settings to practice the planning-teaching-assessing-reflecting cycle aimed at improving student learning. They perceived the edTPA construct as congruent with their beliefs about strong teacher preparation. By tapping into edTPA constructs that added value to their program and that aligned to its identity, teacher educators promoted educative opportunities for teacher candidates, which is an ideal response. Even by wrestling with their tensions as associated with the liabilities identified in edTPA, I learned from the teacher educators how finding alignment with their personal practice and program identity increased their engagement with the initiative. Additionally, they felt less pressure about teaching to the test, when they perceived the edTPA constructs as important for strong preparation and an added value to their course assignments and the curriculum. For instance, the literacy and mathematics instructors modified case study course assignments to include teaching the whole class and emphasizing whole class data analysis and reflection, in addition to assessing, teaching, and analyzing data associated with one focus student. Additionally, instructors added reflection questions to their courses, academic language components, the new

lesson plan format, and even created more specific rubrics to assist their candidates in their knowledge and performance.

Furthermore, teacher educators embedded educative strategies in coursework and in workshops to decrease testing anxiety and to increase candidate self efficacy. Teacher educators noted creating Google and wiki documents as online resources for teacher candidates was as an effective strategy. Providing opportunities for candidates to create learning segments focused on planning and assessment of student learning, teacher educators supported candidate collaboration and learning prior to the program endpoint. Again, to increase the sustainability of support for candidates, teacher educators may consider such activities inside methods courses instead of in workshops outside of coursework in order to involve multiple faculty rather than the expertise of a single educator (i.e., the edTPA coordinator).

Collaborate to Learn and to Integrate Across Content Areas

Additionally, teacher educators discussed ways that they had collaborated with their colleagues to integrate literacy across the content areas. One educator was most excited about the initiative to co-teach and to integrate literacy with social studies and science; however, she explained that this initiative was not sustainable. As course instructors realized that the focus in elementary education for edTPA was based on the state selected handbook, the edTPA Elementary Education emphasizing literacy and mathematics, other content area instructors no longer felt the need to integrate edTPA assignments across content areas. In fact, teacher candidates were required to select literacy and mathematics common core standards as the primary objectives, or their portfolios would earn an incomplete for not meeting edTPA handbook requirements. Another educator indicated equal concern especially since teacher candidates were using informational texts in reading, a focus area in literacy, and compatible

with integration across other content areas. Due to some instructors' perceptions of the scope of the edTPA tasks, as a limiting factor, rather than the importance of the underlying constructs, teacher educators missed an opportunity to improve teacher preparation. Additionally, fewer educators remained involved in the initiative decreasing the professional capital available to their teacher candidates (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). To maximize educative opportunities for teacher candidate engagement, teacher educators are challenged with creating an academically rigorous yet satisfying program of study for their teacher candidates based on the constructs undergirding planning, instructing, and assessing found in teacher performance assessments. Although doing so in a high-stakes context adds undue stress on both the faculty and the candidates, considering the challenges navigated by educators in this study, others may avoid similar pitfalls and create networks for collaborating and learning together (Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014).

Use Data to Identify Program and Candidate Strengths and Needs

Finally, teacher educators identified that using data to identify program and candidate strengths and needs was beneficial for program improvement. Even though they regularly reviewed their program data reports, the teacher educators shared that the edTPA data, which is reported as a composite mean score and subsequent rubric means, provided them with specific, rather than general, data that were beneficial in narrowing their focus for improvement. Teacher educators identified specific areas they needed to target, such as “student use of feedback,” and “analyzing data across the whole class.” Additionally, they had access to student work samples where they could analyze the evidence. In fact, teacher educators used this information to modify assignments in two specific courses in literacy and in mathematics avoiding the pitfall of missing a focus for change. Teacher educators indicated that one of their areas for concern, regarding

teacher-candidate growth and development, was in giving their candidates formative feedback for use while they were learning to be teachers. Considering the edTPA rules for providing candidate support, the educators experienced tension at the program endpoint regarding the kind of feedback that they viewed was permitted, as also noted in the literature (Ratner & Kolman, 2016). By giving formative feedback, while in the program in embedded coursework, teacher candidates are afforded many opportunities to use the feedback as they construct knowledge and increase their self-efficacy prior to the endpoint (Whittaker & Nelson, 2013). Again, as more educators become involved in the preparation of the candidates, the pitfall of teaching to the test may be avoided and the initiative may increase in sustainability. Researchers agree that engaging in data use increases faculty engagement and promotes opportunities for program improvement (Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016; Peck & McDonald, 2013; Sloan, 2013, 2015).

Sustaining the edTPA Initiative for

Continuous Candidate Support and Program Improvement

By using proactive strategies for acting responsively and for avoiding pitfalls, teacher educators are afforded opportunities to improve teacher preparation and to increase the sustainability of the initiative, while under a mandate; however, supports at the department and college levels are additional factors for consideration (Peck, et al., 2014; Sloan, 2013). Please refer to Figure 4 and the discussion to follow regarding supports needed from department and college administrators to increase the sustainability of support for teacher candidates and for program improvement/renewal.

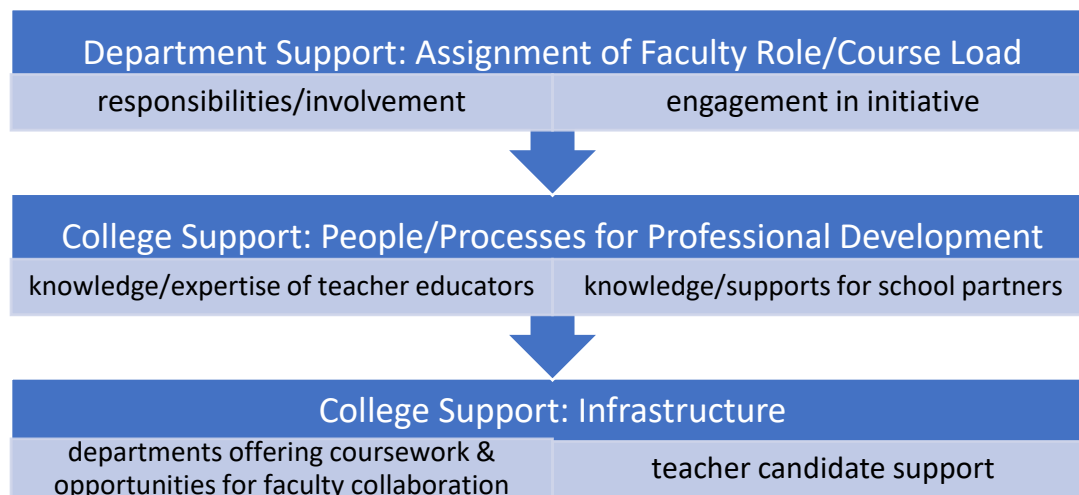


Figure 4. Sustaining the Initiative with Department and College Support

Department Support: Assignment of Faculty Role/Course Load

Based upon the challenges faced by the educators in this study regarding the maintenance of a strong faculty knowledge base and involvement in the edTPA initiative in support of their candidates and program, while under a mandate, I considered the role of the department administrator. While considering faculty voice and choice regarding course preference, and academic freedom, administrators may pause to consider faculty responsibilities and the level of their involvement in initial teacher preparation programs. As teacher educators participate in edTPA professional development, developing expertise that will support candidate development and learning as well as program cohesiveness, administrators may consider the consequences for initial preparation programs when faculty are moved into other assignments/roles (e.g., teaching graduate courses). Not only will their level of knowledge be afforded to the program any further; but also, fewer people will be available to sustain continuous candidate support and continuous improvement. Additionally, the role of the edTPA coordinator must be addressed by administrators, especially when much of the candidate preparation resides in workshops outside

of coursework. With an unexpected loss of the coordinator, the sustainability of support for candidates and program continuity may be in jeopardy.

College Support: People/Processes for Professional Development

If resources are not available at the department level, then college administrators may consider ways to provide on-going professional development to maintain and to increase the knowledge pool of teacher educators, newly hired educators, and part-time instructors, who may vary in teaching assignments in the initial teacher preparation programs. As noted in this study, professional development was offered by the edTPA coordinator for faculty to participate alongside the teacher candidates. Additionally, faculty were assigned to work with adjuncts to bring them on board. Considering the few number of educators involved in the initiative with edTPA knowledge/expertise, without a consistent on-going plan for professional development, existing faculty may become overburdened, as was the situation for the edTPA coordinator at StateU.

Furthermore, professional development is needed for school partners, cooperating/mentor teachers, and school administrators. I learned from teacher educators in this study that mentor teachers and administrators lacked knowledge of edTPA and how to support teacher candidates with implementation strategies. For example, mentor teachers complained that candidates were pulled from the field to write their edTPA portfolios, which is a valid concern causing candidates to miss time teaching children and supporting the teacher. Additionally, mentor teachers presented negative attitudes about teacher candidate ability in completing an advanced assessment and the time needed for implementation in their classrooms. College administrators in this study assisted program educators by addressing mentor teachers' concerns in face-to-face meetings and presentations. They helped to negotiate criteria that were needed for candidate

support in completion of the teacher performance assessment, while placed in their assigned class settings. While the issue was not completely resolved, the college administrators were making attempts to support their program faculty and teacher candidates, while addressing valid school personnel concerns for their students' learning.

College Support: Infrastructure

Finally, it was noted by teacher educators that the college infrastructure was both supportive and non-supportive of the edTPA initiative. The infrastructure created to support teacher candidates was perceived as effective by the teacher educators. Teacher candidates were provided a place to upload their edTPAs with people providing technology support and arranging for them to pay for the upload through a voucher system. To decrease the financial burden of their candidates, the college administrators embedded the cost of edTPA into the course lab fee so that candidates could use their financial aid to pay for edTPA. In doing so, the candidates uploaded their portfolios for external scoring using a voucher rather than their credit cards.

Teacher educators experienced an unexpected problem, when the college infrastructure was modified to be comprised of six smaller departments instead of four larger departments. Thinking that departmental reorganization would support department administrators and faculty, the college administrators did not anticipate that the new arrangement would provide increased difficulty for teacher educators to collaborate. For example, the elementary-education program educators found themselves in need of increased collaborations with the literacy faculty who were teaching outside of the department due to the organizational change. Teacher educators described their added challenge in their attempts to agree on who should own the literacy courses as well as the content included in the courses as related to the edTPA initiative.

Significance of Study

Making sense of teacher-educators' perceptions of edTPA and the impact of their actions in response to the edTPA mandate on their program, I described ways to avoid pitfalls and to act responsively to improve preparation. Also, I considered department and college supports needed for sustaining the edTPA initiative, in a high-stakes context, for continuous candidate support and for program improvement. I presented findings that may benefit policy makers, teacher educators, teacher candidates, and the participants. Please refer to Figure 5, Providing an Overview of the Significance of the Study at the end of the following discussion.

Policy Makers

As this study highlighted one program's response to the edTPA mandate, noting the state's exploratory phase with a few programs, the one-year implementation phase recommended for all programs, followed by two years of consequential use, policy makers may benefit in understanding that time is a major factor for consideration when enacting a high-stakes policy in teacher education. Teacher educators need much time to understand the benefits and liabilities of a teacher performance assessment, such as edTPA, to act responsively in the best interest of their teacher candidates and the pupils they will serve. Since teacher preparation is as complex as the profession itself, considering the use of edTPA in a high-stakes context is critical in comparison to its use for non-consequential program/candidate evaluation purposes. In a high-stakes context, policy makers may take heed in recognizing the power issues at stake for teacher educators who may not have taken part in conversations for policy setting. Policy makers may consider the value of teacher educators' voice in shaping policy as educators develop an understanding of (a) the assessment's body of knowledge as compared to educators' philosophical approaches to teacher education, and (b) reasons for enacting the policy and its appropriateness/capability for

addressing that purpose. Furthermore, having teacher educators who understand the developmental needs of novice teacher candidates and program design would be important in shaping policy. Additionally, infrastructures of support and professional development are needed for teacher educators to prepare for the implementation of the assessment and for curriculum change. Despite the dire need to respond to public concern regarding teacher education in the U.S., policy makers may also consider the length of time required to establish the validity and reliability of an assessment, prior to establishing its use for accountability. Finally, policy makers may consider involving teacher educators in opportunities to develop edTPA policies that support teacher candidate development and learning and program improvement in non-consequential contexts. By providing time for innovation and multiple perspectives, educators may provide a reasonable timeline for edTPA implementation and educative use that would benefit the preparation of their candidates for teaching in a global, 21st century knowledge society.

Teacher Educators

Teacher educators may benefit from this study by understanding how educators responded to the high-stakes mandate in their state. Having one year to fully implement the edTPA prior to its consequential use, educators were still challenged in maintaining consistent teacher educator involvement/engagement, relying heavily on the knowledge of the edTPA coordinator and literacy and mathematics professors. While under a mandate to use teacher performance assessments, teacher educators may avoid pitfalls such as teaching to the test, resisting/complying rather than engaging/inquiring, lacking knowledge, and missing focus areas for change. Instead, teacher educators may learn from this study how to avoid these mishaps and to act responsively to sustain progress in support of their teacher candidates. By identifying

assessment components which may be beneficial in teacher preparation and educative strategies for supporting candidates throughout their program, teacher educators may develop an obstacle course, or academically rigorous yet satisfying curriculum, aligned to their program goals and unique program identity. As noted in my study, these were not entirely realized at StateU. edTPA was not developed as an assessment that would dictate the curriculum, nor did the developers intend that it be a single measure used at the program endpoint (Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016; Wei & Pecheone, 2010; Whittaker & Nelson, 2013). However, edTPA content and construct validity, as noted in the *Educative assessment and meaningful support: 2015 edTPA Administrative Report* (Pecheone, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2016) provide some assurance that it is measuring what it was designed to measure. As noted in this study, teacher educators could not think of a better assessment regarding its content. Providing information for teacher educators, as noted in the report, on the reliability and use of the assessment is needed to assist educators as they wrestle with these tensions in a high-stakes context. Finally, as teacher educators learn more about teacher performance assessment, they may draw on these findings to consider alternate responses to inform policy development and to consider edTPA use in non-consequential contexts.

Teacher Candidates

Using the edTPA for consequential purposes, the teacher educators in this study recognized the potential effects on teacher-candidate development and learning as they aimed to provide immediate supports for them throughout their program. They revised program documents to provide stronger program alignment, and their college administrators became involved in negotiating issues in school placements. Responding to candidate anxiety teacher educators were proactive in setting up structures of support, such as resource documents, new

assignments, and practice opportunities in courses and in workshops to support their growth and development as new teachers. Considering Fuller's (1969) model of teacher development, novices need structures of support to assist them in moving beyond concerns for themselves and their tasks to focus on their students' learning (Conway & Clarke, 2003). Recognizing criteria embedded in edTPA emphasizing critical thinking, reflection, and analysis of teaching effectiveness, teacher educators increased teacher-candidate supports, while increasing their expectations of novices. Setting higher expectations for novice learners, while providing supports, teacher educators reported was a benefit for candidates in successfully completing edTPA and increasing their self-efficacy.

Participants

By providing instrumental case study research for the participants on their program's response to the edTPA mandate, this study will assist them in understanding their perceptions of edTPA and subsequent actions resulting in program change. With added accountability measures in their state for program approval and accreditation, this study will support their efforts in meeting requirements for state program approval and accreditation. Using information from this research study, participants may describe ways that they are meeting state and national standards for teacher preparation aimed at promoting continuous program improvement/renewal. Additionally, they may identify areas of focus regarding ways to sustain the edTPA initiative aimed at preparing learner-ready teachers focused on student learning, responding to calls for reform in teacher education.

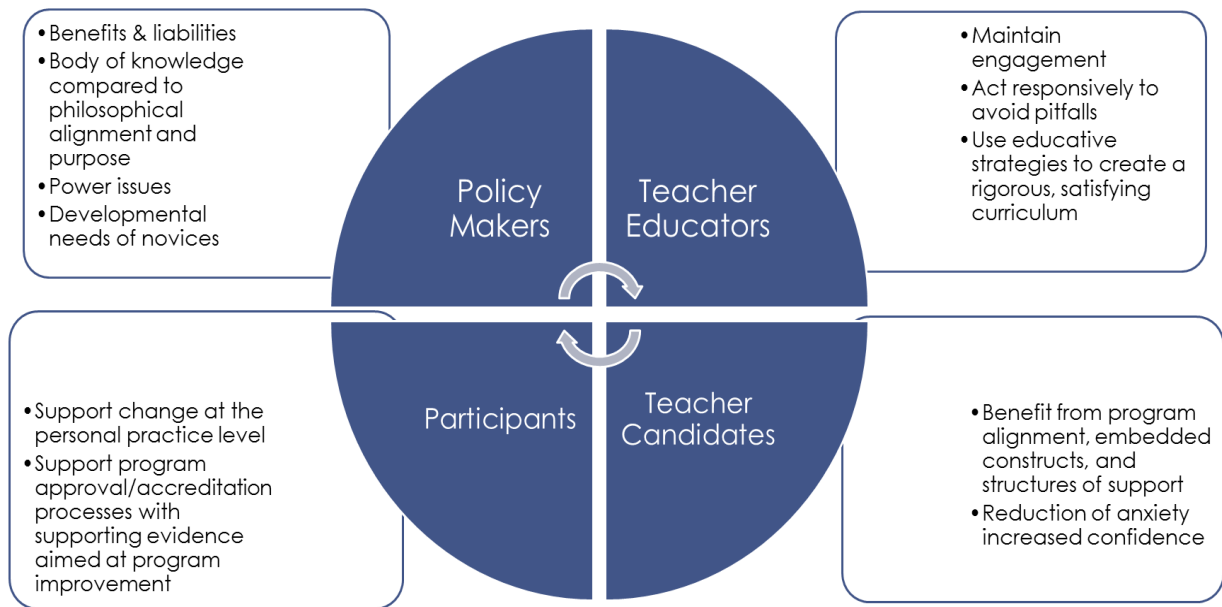


Figure 5. Providing and Overview of the Significance of the Study

Implications

This naturalistic inquiry provided an opportunity to deeply examine one program's response to a consequential mandate to use a teacher performance assessment in the preparation of elementary education undergraduates. By understanding teacher educators' perceptions of edTPA used in a high-stakes context, and their resulting actions of change, educators across the country pressured with the onset of new accountability measures, may glean insight in how to act responsively to avoid pitfalls in navigating new terrain. Since state policy is enacted in various ways giving some teacher-education programs less time to respond to a high-stakes mandate than others, this study provides proactive ways for program educators to act responsively based on research. Rather than testing the safety of the playground while using it, educators are provided insights into the challenges perceived by educators and their lessons learned.

Limitations

This study has some limitations that others should consider in their review of the research. One limitation is related to the need to protect the anonymity of the participants. Due to the single case study design, the eight participants were insistent that they not be identified internally or externally; therefore, I was unable to disaggregate the data by role. Additionally, I was very selective in the quotes that I could use to provide thick description to avoid revealing the participants. Rather, I chose to aggregate the data and use numbers to provide an overall program response to the edTPA mandate, focusing on their perceptions and actions holistically. A second limitation is the fact that the study did not meet requirements for prolonged engagement. I collected data across two semesters, roughly a seven-month time span. As I interviewed each participant, they had to recall information from the past three years in describing their perceptions and subsequent actions in response to the state mandate. Additionally, I relied on multiple documents that I could locate online and that they were willing to provide me, influencing my interpretation of the results. Finally, I adhered to participants' requests to reserve description of their roles and responsibilities, while preserving their anonymity, which may limit the degree to which the reviewer has access to thick description in determining transferability.

Future Research

This study provided many insights into the perceptions and actions of teacher educators working within an elementary-education program as they responded to a high-stakes mandate requiring edTPA for teacher certification. Additionally, this study's findings provided educative strategies that teacher educators used in support of the preparation of their teacher candidates. Future research is needed to see if program faculty can sustain support for their teacher

candidates, while under a mandate, and if so, to examine new strategies and/or curriculum changes in support of teacher development and learning and for continuous program improvement. Having access to data reports and enrollment numbers to analyze trends in teacher education, following the enactment of the high-stakes policy, teacher educators and policy makers will gain additional information in support of research efforts. Additionally, future research would be beneficial in examining teacher educators' perceptions and actions in their enactment of edTPA in a non-consequential context. Finally, more research is warranted on the predictive validity of edTPA to see if teacher candidate success on edTPA is predictive of student achievement during their first year of teaching, addressing public concerns regarding the state of education in the U. S.

Conclusion

The teacher educators in the elementary-education program demonstrated thoughtful intentions as they considered the best way possible to provide a strong teacher preparation program for their teacher candidates. Preparing teacher candidates who would become effective teachers was their primary goal; however, ensuring that their candidates were successful on edTPA became a close second. When teacher educators are faced with a high-stakes mandate in teacher preparation, they are forced very quickly into a response. Making sense of their perceptions as related to edTPA as a measure, as related to educators' roles/responsibilities and the associated consequences, and as connected to what affects teacher-candidate development and learning, teacher educators' actions resulting in change became evident in this study, providing us with a detailed view of the program's response. By understanding the obstacles faced by the educators and their response, others are provided possibilities for considering a new response. As one participant boldly stated, when considering a high-stakes assessment, we must

remember that it should become the background not the foreground. Additionally, John Dewey reminds us that both the teacher and the learner are knowers and benefit from opportunities where they may engage in ongoing inquiry (Dewey & Bentley, 1945). Likewise, teacher educators should aim to provide educative opportunities for their candidates to investigate problems and to arrive at solutions, while constructing knowledge that is worth knowing. Since teaching and learning are evolving, rather than static processes, teacher educators are wise to meet the challenge of maintaining their program identity as they consider educative opportunities for their candidates in response to a high-stakes mandate in an era of increased accountability.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Introduction: In several states in the U.S., teacher preparation program educators are required to incorporate a teacher performance assessment, such as the edTPA, as a requirement for teacher certification, for program completion, and in some cases, for graduation.
1. How would you describe the edTPA?
2. How have you been involved with edTPA? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probe: How would you describe your roles and responsibilities for edTPA in your program? Probe for additional informants: How would you describe the use of the edTPA in your courses/field experiences?
3. How would you describe your program's response to the statewide adoption of edTPA?
4. Tell me some things that you like and/or may not like about edTPA.
5. Does the edTPA align with the purpose and mission of your program? If yes, how so? If no, why?
6. What do you see are the effects of the edTPA? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probes: on your program? on the curriculum? Probes for additional informants: on your learning? on your teaching? on teacher candidates' learning/ on your teacher candidates' teaching?
7. Have you made any changes because of edTPA? If yes, how so? If no, why?
8. How are teacher candidates prepared for edTPA? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probes: By task? By course? In field experience/student teaching?
9. What do you believe teacher candidates need to be successful on the edTPA? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probe: How do you think that should be provided?
10. Has your approach to teacher preparation changed since edTPA? If yes, how so? If no, why?
11. As a measure of teacher candidates' teaching effectiveness, how would you describe the edTPA?
12. Do you believe the edTPA will make your teacher candidates better future elementary teachers? If yes, how so? If no, why?
13. Do you believe the edTPA improves teacher preparation? If yes, how? If no, why not?
14. What is your overall opinion of the edTPA? Do you have any final thoughts that you would like to share?

Appendix B

Researcher Involvement in Data Collection

Participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1st email contact date	2/9	2/14	2/14	2/14	2/28	2/28	2/28	3/28
2nd email contact date	N/A	N/A	N/A	3/08 phone; 3/15 email	3/15	3/15	3/15	N/A
Consent	2/13	2/16	2/23	3/23	3/27	3/28	4/4	4/17
Scheduled Interview Date	2/13	2/16	2/23	3/23	3/27	3/28	4/4	4/17
Conducted face-to-face interview	2/13	2/16	2/23	3/23	3/27	3/28	4/4	4/17
Sent transcript to participant for review	2/16	2/28	2/28	4/6	4/6	4/6	N/A	5/3
Sent email reminders - document requests	3/7	3/10, 4/6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received Documents for Analysis	3/27	4/6, 5/15, 5/23, 6/9	N/A	3/23, 5/15	4/6	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sent email reminders - transcript approval	5/12	N/A	5/12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received approved and/or modified transcript	5/17	5/5	5/23	5/16	4/6	4/27	4/17	5/4
Responded to transcript and/or documents follow-up	5/17	5/17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sent Follow-up Questions 1 - via email	5/12	5/9, 6/7	N/A	5/12, 5/17, 6/2, 6/9 phone	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Facilitated phone interview for follow-up	N/A	5/9	N/A	6/13	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received transcript of phone interview for approval	N/A	5/17	N/A	6/20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received approval of phone interview transcript	N/A	6/9	N/A	6/25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Approved follow-up questions via email	5/17	6/9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emailed additional question and document request	N/A	N/A	N/A	6/9, 6/19	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received response to question and document	N/A	N/A	N/A	7/10, 7/18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emailed results - member checking	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2
Received approval or modifications of results	9/7 phone 9/14 email	9/7; 9/14 phone 9/17 email	9/7 phone	8/5 emailed 8/13 modified	8/2	8/19	8/3 modified	8/4 modified

Appendix C

Participant Involvement in Study

Participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1st email contact date	2/9	2/14	2/14	2/14	2/28	2/28	2/28	3/28
2nd email contact date	N/A	N/A	N/A	3/08 phone; 3/15 email	3/15	3/15	3/15	N/A
Consent	2/13	2/16	2/23	3/23	3/27	3/28	4/4	4/17
Scheduled interview date	2/13	2/16	2/23	3/23	3/27	3/28	4/4	4/17
Participated in face-to-face interview	2/13	2/16	2/23	3/23	3/27	3/28	4/4	4/17
Received transcript for review	2/16	2/28	2/28	4/6	4/6	4/6	N/A	5/3
Emailed reply	N/A	3/10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sent Documents for Analysis	3/27	4/6, 5/15, 5/23, 6/9	N/A	3/23, 5/15	4/6	N/A	N/A	N/A
Approved and/or modified transcript	5/17	5/5	5/23	5/16	4/6	4/27	4/17	5/4
Responded to transcript and/or documents follow-up	5/17	5/17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received Follow-up Questions 1 - via email	5/12	6/7	N/A	5/12, 5/17, 6/2 6/9 phone	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Participated in phone interview for follow-up	N/A	5/9	N/A	6/13	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received transcript of phone interview for approval	N/A	5/17	N/A	6/20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Approved phone interview transcript	N/A	6/9	N/A	6/25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Approved follow-up questions via email	5/17	6/9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received additional question and document request	N/A	N/A	N/A	6/9, 6/19	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emailed question and document	N/A	N/A	N/A	7/10, 7/18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Received results - member checking	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2	8/2
Approved or modified results	9/7 phone; 9/14 emailed	9/14 emailed 9/17 emailed final		8/5 emailed 8/13 modified	8/2	8/19	8/3 modified	8/4 modified

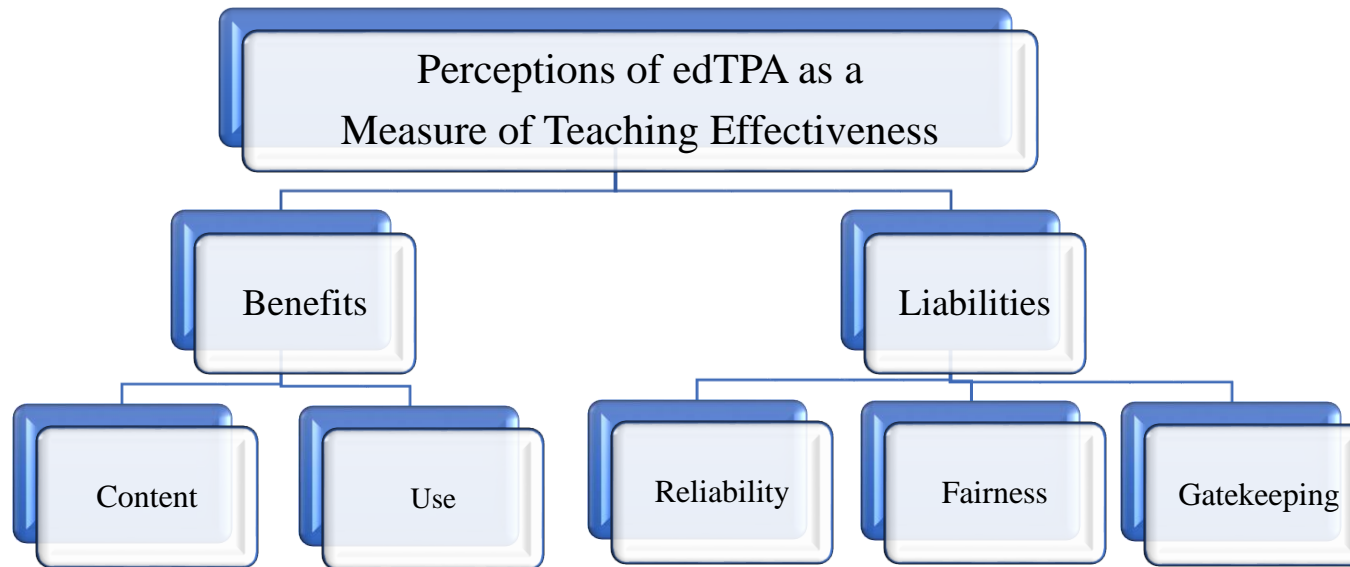
Appendix D

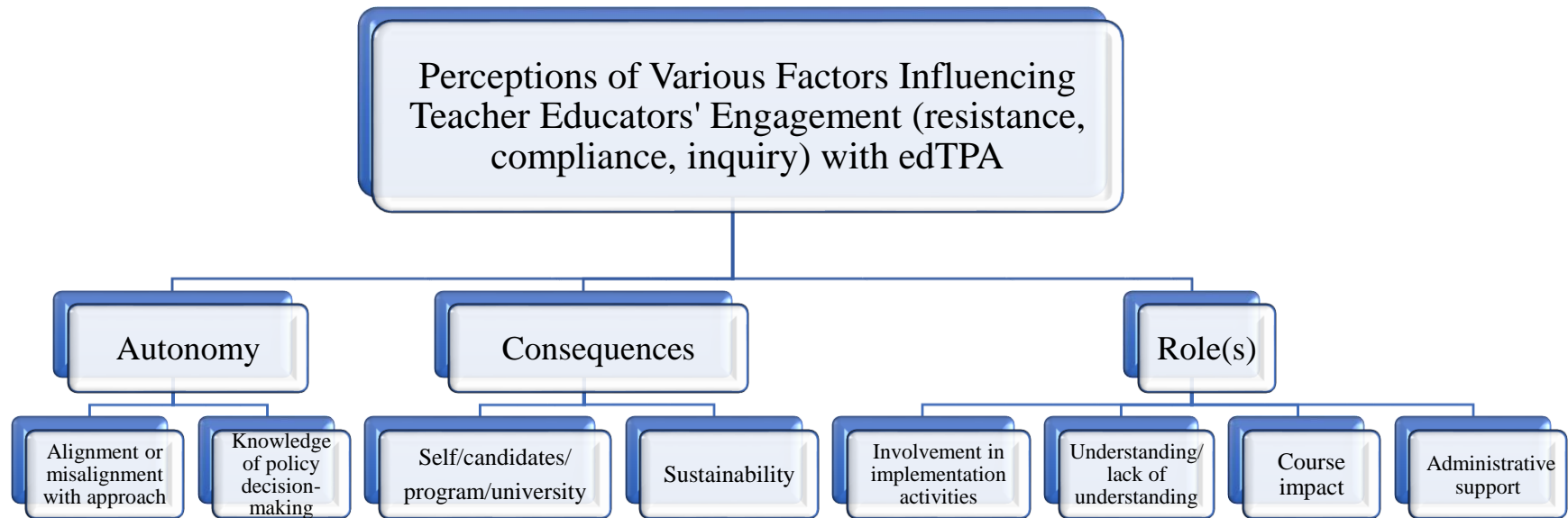
Coding Chart

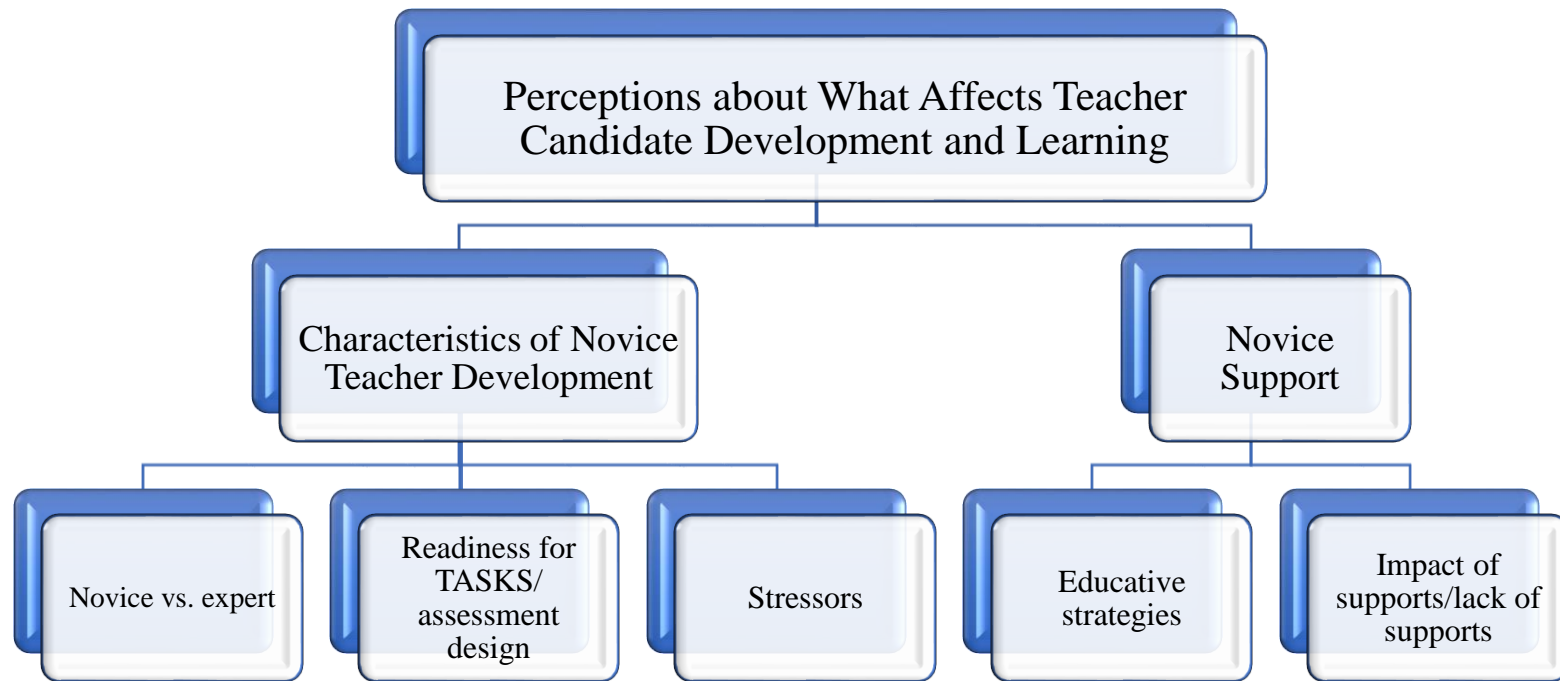
Themes	Definitions	Sub-category coding
I. Perceptions of edTPA as a Measure of Teaching Effectiveness	Teacher educators' perceptions of the benefits and liabilities of the edTPA as a measure of teaching effectiveness to determine readiness for the profession (i.e. perceptions of the assessment itself as a valid and reliable measurement tool)	Level 1 Codes: benefits, liabilities Level 2 Codes: content validity, use, reliability, fairness, gatekeeper Level 3 Codes: quality constructs, authenticity, intentionality, public perception, scorer training/expertise/effort, variance-context, benefits parts of the curriculum, unintended factors for success/lack of success
II. Perceptions of Various Factors Influencing Engagement (i.e, resistance, compliance, inquiry) with edTPA	Teacher educators' level of engagement (i.e., resistance, compliance, inquiry) with edTPA considering their perceptions of various factors.	Level 1 Codes: autonomy, consequences, role(s) Level 2 Codes: alignment/misalignment with approach, knowledge of policy decision-making, impact on self/candidate/program/university, issue of sustainability, involvement with implementation, understanding/need for professional development, course impact, college administrator support
III. Perceptions about What Affects Teacher Candidate Development and Learning	Teacher educators' perceptions about what affects teacher candidate development and learning.	Level 1 Codes: characteristics of novice teacher development, novice support Level 2 Codes: novice vs. expert, readiness for TASKS/assessment design, stressors, educative strategies, impact of supports/lack of supports
IV. Actions Resulting in Changes	Teacher educators' actions resulting in changes due to the edTPA mandate.	Level 1 Codes: personal practice, course, program, college Level 2 Codes: research-based strategies, academic language, collaboration/integration of content, assignment additions/modifications, alignment vision/mission, workshop support, data response, impact of department reorganization, infrastructure support, alignment writing initiative

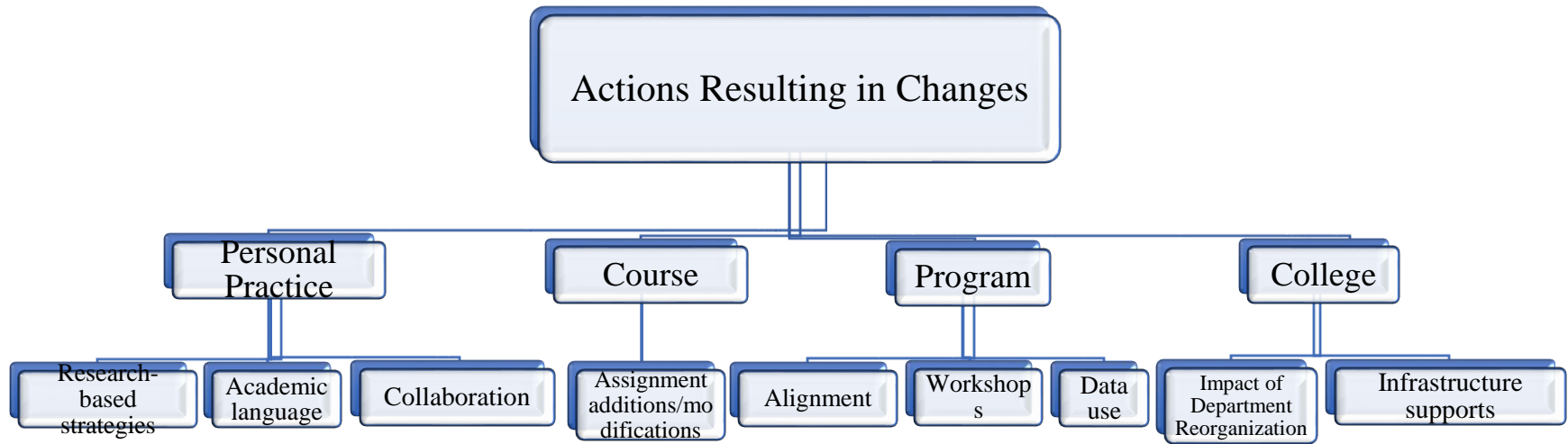
Appendix E

Coding Trees









Appendix F

Document Review Coding Process

SUB-CATEGORY CODES		MAIN CATEGORIES
Academic language, academic learning, diverse groups, standards, planning		Planning for Instruction
Instruction		Engaging Learners and Providing Instruction
Assessment, reflection, student learning		Assessing Student Learning
Implementation, opportunities to practice, resources		Strategies for Implementation
Writing, research, reflection		Reflection
Data use, program goals		Program Improvement
INITIAL DOCUMENT CODES		
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS		
Title	Open Coding	
Assessment and Correction in Mathematics Education Syllabi	analyze whole class learning, evaluation criteria, reflection prompts for TASK 4: 1a-c	
Mathematics Case Study Rubric (Basic Facts)	analyzing student understandings, analyzing student work samples, reflection on teaching, mathematics instruction	
Assessment and Correction: Reading Education Syllabi	analysis of student learning, reflection prompt TASK 3, lesson plan template, reflection questions, identifying a central focus, Common Core Standards, reading instruction, TASK 1 & 3, planning, assessment, academic language, language function, unpack the standard, identify strategy and related skills, language demands and supports, instructional supports, graphic organizers, anchor charts, teaching posters, sentence stems, foldables, research/theory component	
Literacy Case Study Rubric	TASK 3, assessment, academic language use, alignment of assessment to standard. evidence of results, chosen strategies and skills for instruction, evidence of progress of student learning, summative assessment, alignment to instruction, written feedback - strengths and weaknesses, student's use of academic language, language function, syntax, vocabulary, content understandings, next steps for targeted support, justification with research and theory	
Literacy Tutoring Case Study	TASK 1, TASK 3, reflection questions/prompts added	
Internship Seminar Syllabi	edTPA Portfolio Checklist , Service Learning Project	
Teaching Internship	teach two formal lessons, literacy learning segment , edTPA Portfolio Notebook Resource, edTPA assignment	
Probability and Statistics for P-8 Teachers	data analysis of student learning	

PROGRAM WORKSHOPS	
Title	Codes
Block 2 Training Activity: Learning Segment and Planning Commentary Assignment	TASK 1, planning support, learning segment, candidate writing, 3 lessons, lesson plan format, context for learning, planning commentary, language functions, analyze, argue, categorize, compare/contrast, describe, explain, interpret, predict, question, retell, summarize, or infer, Common Core Reading standard
TASK 2 Note Page	TASK 2, instruction support, candidate practice, videotaping lessons, uploading to TK20, self-assessment, peer evaluation, video clips, note page, view their learning segments, noting instances, promoting positive learning environment, student engagement in learning, deepening student learning, facilitates student-centered discussions, elicits and builds on students' responses to extend and clarify thinking, encourages students to evaluate their own abilities, emphasizes feedback and support to students
TASK 2 Video Clip Note-taking	TASK 2, instruction support, video clips, candidate practice, commentary prompts
edTPA TASK PowerPoints	candidate access and review, PowerPoints online
Notebook Resource	TASK resource support, edTPA resources, Making Good Choices, Understanding Rubric Level Progressions, edTPA handbook, edTPA templates, context for learning, commentaries
Boot Camp Writing Days	writing days, timeline
PROGRAM/COLLEGE DOCUMENTS	
Title	Codes
Lesson Plan Format	lesson plan template, academic language, assessment, evaluation criteria, alignment to the learning objective, formative, summative language, engage and motivate, instructional strategies, learning tasks, academic learning, personal/cultural/community assets, engagement of students, opportunity to practice, application of lesson, content/practice, differentiate instruction for diverse learners, IEP/504, ELL/ESOL, struggling learners, strategy of focus
Wiki document	Candidates, faculty, and supervisors access handbooks, templates, other edTPA resources.
ECE BSED Assessment Results	context for learning, knowledge of students, feedback to guide further learning, analysis guided instruction, research and/or theory
ECE BSED Program Map and Detailed Program Map	program of study, program map
Early Childhood through Secondary – Our Vision, Our Mission	vision statement, innovative teaching practices, educational research, community engagement, creative activity, appreciation for diverse populations and perspectives, mission statement, leaders who value diversity, possess knowledge, skills, and dispositions, positively affect change, academically rigorous, inclusive, supportive learning environments, acknowledge and embrace the contributions of all groups, within our diverse society, groups formed by gender, ethnicity, race, culture, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, personal experience, benefit of all, combination of many voices and work, equality, social justice
edTPA Institutional Data Analysis	program mean scores, state highest and lowest averages, guiding questions, consideration of strengths, needs, course activities that might address areas for improvement, information for faculty, condition codes, rules for submission, vouchers
edTPA Partner Schools PowerPoint	teacher presentation, Professional Development Schools, clarify roles, guidelines for acceptable candidate support, uncertainty of the depth, type of involvement permitted

Appendix G

Researcher Reflexive Notebook Overview

Month	Memos, Reflection, On-going Analysis Weekly	Peer Debriefs
JANUARY	1/3/2017, IRB approval 1/27/2017, IRB amendment approved	Overview of study; IRB steps, procedures for data collection
FEBRUARY	2/13/2017, 2/16/2017, 2/23/2017, 2/27/2017	
MARCH	3/1/2017, 3/2/2017, 3/4/2017, 3/23/2017, 3/27/2017, 3/28/2017	Update on selection pool; interview process; document reviews
APRIL	4/4/2017, 4/5/2017, 4/6/2017, 4/7/2017, 4/20/2017, 4/24/2017, 4/29/2017	Review of data collection procedures, document analyses, transcripts, update on decisions/rationales pertaining to dilemmas
MAY	5/4/2017, 5/5/2017, 5/6/2017, 5/9/2017, 5/10/2017, 5/12/2017, 5/16/2017, 5/17/2017	Decision rationales; initial coding and discussion of initial and sub-category coding
JUNE	6/8/2017, 6/9/2017, 6/13/2017, 6/14/2017, 6/27/2017	Ongoing data collection procedures; issues with anonymity, narrowing to four themes; ensuring tight definitions
JULY	7/1/2017 – 7/9/2017, 7/11/18/2017 writing results, 7/19/2017 – 7/26/2017 writing discussion	Coding of larger dataset
AUGUST	8/1/17-8/13/17 member checks of results and writing revisions	Review of results and discussion

Appendix H

Document Review

COURSE ASSIGNMENT CHANGES					
Title	Before edTPA	After edTPA	Point in Program	Facilitator	Description of change
3a. Assessment and Correction in Mathematics Education Syllabi	ECE 4250 Fall 2012 ECE 4250L (implemented in lab)	ECE 4250 Fall 2016 ECE 4250L (implemented in lab)	Block 3	Course Instructor	Additional assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> edTPA Whole Class Analysis: candidates work in pairs (or groups of three) to analyze whole class learning related to a specific mathematics topic using a class set of work samples. Candidates create an evaluation criteria specific to the mathematical topic and skill that is being assessed. Pairs respond to edTPA question prompts for Task 4: 1a-c.
3b. Mathematics Case Study Rubric (Basic Facts)	ECE 4250 Spring 2013	ECE 4250 Fall 2014	Block 3	Course Instructor	2014 Rubric is inclusive of the evaluation of the added edTPA-like whole class analysis assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing student understandings Analyzing student work samples Reflection on teaching
3c. Assessment and Correction: Reading Education Syllabi	LIT 4250 Summer 2014	LIT 4250 Spring 2017 *new assignment summer 2016	Block 3	Course Instructor; edTPA Coordinator	<p><u>Summer 2014:</u> This 2014 Reading syllabus includes the Reading Case Study assignment and Parent Conference including the written report. It does not include the spring 2017 assignments aligned closely to TASK 1 and TASK 3 in Literacy.</p> <p><u>Spring 2017:</u> The first three assignments have been modified since 2014 to be more specific to edTPA requirements – identifying a key strategy aligned to an assessment and with analysis of student learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Case Study: includes a strategy of focus, aligned to the edTPA Literacy TASK 1. Evidence will be collected and analyzed for the case study report, aligned to edTPA Literacy TASK 3; reflection questions/prompts added Literacy Tutoring Summary Report for Parents/Guardians and Conference Literacy Clinic Session Plans, Reflections. Lesson plan template and reflection questions. Candidates create plans identifying a central focus aligned to

					<p>Common Core Standards and one component of reading instruction, aligned to edTPA constructs in literacy.</p> <p>Three new assignments focused on edTPA Literacy TASK 1 & 3 in 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRP Group Presentations • Assignment Comprehension Strategy and Research/Theory Activity (Google Doc – Unpacking Reading Content Standards K-5) – *first taught summer 2016 – completed end of Block 2 Workshop edTPA language includes: language function, unpack the standard, identify strategy and related skills, language demands and supports. Instructional supports are described as graphic organizers, anchor charts, teaching posters, sentence stems, foldables, etc.; Research/theory component related to the teaching of the comprehension standard, strategy, or skills. Comprehension is the focus of the Elementary Education edTPA Handbook. • Class Work Analysis Activity - analysis of a set of class work in Literacy – aligned to TASK 3 Assessment in Literacy.
3d. Literacy Case Study Rubric		Fall 2016	Block 3 (embedded in LIT 4250)	Course Instructor; edTPA Coordinator	<p><u>Rubric evaluation with emphasis on TASK 3 edTPA assessment and academic language use criteria:</u> alignment of assessment to standard; evidence of results; chosen strategies and skills for instruction; evidence of progress of student learning; summative assessment; alignment to instruction; written feedback - strengths and weaknesses; student's use of academic language (language function, syntax, and vocabulary) to develop content understandings; next steps for targeted support; justification with research and theory</p>
3e. Literacy Tutoring Case Study	2012	Fall 2015	Block 3 (embedded in LIT 4250)	Course Instructor; edTPA Coordinator	<p><u>Modified Literacy Case Study:</u> includes a strategy of focus, aligned to edTPA Literacy TASK 1. Evidence will be collected and analyzed for the case study report, aligned to edTPA Literacy TASK 3; reflection questions/prompts added</p>
3f. Teaching Internship Seminar Syllabi	ECE 4280 Fall 2014	ECE 4280 Fall 2016	Block 4 Student Teaching Seminar	edTPA Coordinator	<p><u>Added assignments to fall 2016:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • edTPA Portfolio Checklist – assignment worth 100 points for completion • Service Learning Project – not related to edTPA

3g. Teaching Internship	ECE 4285 Spring 2015	ECE 4285 Spring 2017	Block 4 Student Teaching	edTPA Coordinator	<u>Modified/added assignments to spring 2017:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates teach two formal lessons and the (3-5) edTPA Literacy learning segment in field and reflect on its completion instead of the 7 lesson plans for role reversal assignment. edTPA is included as an assignment and requirement for external scoring.
3h. Probability and Statistics for P-8 Teachers	N/A; no change evident after edTPA	MATH 4712 Fall 2016, Spring 2017	Block 3	Course Instructors	Changes have not been made to syllabi; however, interview data indicated that a change is in process – added focus on data analysis of student learning.
PROGRAM WORKSHOPS					
Title	Before edTPA	After edTPA	Point in Program	Facilitator	Description of change
3i. Block 2 Training Activity: Learning Segment and Planning Commentary Assignment	2014	Revised Summer 2016	End of Block 2 Workshop (LIT 3262: Teaching Content/Process: Reading Ed but taught in workshop)	edTPA Coordinator	<u>Group project practice opportunity (TASK 1 Planning support):</u> candidates write a learning segment of 3 lessons using your lesson plan format. They use the Context for Learning given to their group. The planning commentary will be completed on the learning segment they create. They will choose one of the following language functions: analyze, argue, categorize, compare/contrast, describe, explain, interpret, predict, question, retell, summarize, or infer. The learning segment will be based on a Common Core Reading standard for the grade level their groups decides upon.
3j. TASK 2 Note Page	None	2015	Block 2 Block 3 Workshops	edTPA Coordinator	<u>Practice opportunity (TASK 2 Instruction support):</u> candidates practice videotaping lessons and upload to TK20. They complete a self-assessment and to a peer evaluation. To select video clips, they use the note page as they view their learning segments noting instances as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on promoting positive learning environment Emphasis on student engagement in learning Emphasis on deepening student learning: facilitates student-centered discussions; elicits and builds on students' responses to extend and clarify thinking; Encourages students to evaluate their own abilities Emphasizes feedback and support to students

3k. TASK 2 Video Clip Note-taking	None	2015	Block 2 Block 3 Workshops	edTPA Coordinator	<u>Practice opportunity (TASK 2 Instruction support)</u> : candidates use form after they have selected two video clips. Candidates write down time stamps (beginning and ending) to use as a guide in responding to commentary prompts.
3l. edTPA TASK Overview PowerPoints	None	2015	End of Block 3 Workshop	edTPA Coordinator	<u>Overview of TASKS</u> : candidates access and review PowerPoints online before meeting at the end of block 3 workshop.
3m. Notebook Resource	None	2016	Block 3 Workshop	edTPA Coordinator	<u>TASK resource support</u> : chart includes directions for the candidate to compile the most important edTPA resources in a 3-ring binder: Making Good Choices, Understanding Rubric Level Progressions, edTPA Handbook, edTPA Templates, Context for Learning, Commentaries.
3n. Boot Camp Writing Days	None	2015	Block 4 Student Teaching Workshop	edTPA Coordinator	<u>Internship (student teaching) writing days</u> : four full days planned by the edTPA Coordinator and not included in seminar course. A timeline with the dates is sent to candidates for writing days and a suggested pacing of weeks to complete edTPA.
PROGRAM AND COLLEGE DOCUMENTS					
Title	Before edTPA	After edTPA	Point in Program	Facilitator	Description of change
3o. Lesson Plan Format	2012	Fall 2015	*Introduced Block 1 in Classroom Management course (ECE 3281: Practicum 1) Incorporated in Block 3 - LIT 3263: Teaching Content/Process: Integrating Literacy Education and the Writing Process	Course Instructors	<u>Modified lesson plan template to include the following</u> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic language component of edTPA • More specific directions in the Assessment section to include identification of student work samples, evaluation criteria, and evidence of alignment to the learning objective. Formative and summative language is also added as used in the edTPA. • Chart to breakout the Assessment components • Engage and motivate - edTPA like language • New edTPA like language and questions in the <i>Instruction</i> section: instructional strategies and learning tasks, academic learning and personal/cultural/community assets, engagement of students. • edTPA like language: opportunity to practice, application of lesson content/practice • Chart to breakout specific evidence of strategies/skills used to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.

					edTPA-like language includes: IEP/504, ELL/ESOL, struggling learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on strategy of focus – edTPA like language
3p. Wiki document	none	2015	Program Resource	edTPA Coordinator	Candidates, faculty, and supervisors have access to handbooks, templates, other edTPA resources, including pacing timeline.
3q. ECE BSED Assessment Results	2014-2015	No access	Program Document	Web Resource	Data results for Literacy Learning Segment (READ 3262) – Context for learning “Knowledge of Students” - lowest scoring Data results for Literacy Case Study (READ 4251) - Feedback to Guide Further Learning Explain how the analysis guided instruction. Cite research and/or theory to support your decision – lowest scoring
3r. ECE BSED Program Map and Detailed Program Map	No access	2016-2017	Program Document	Web Resource	An overview of the program of study. Detailed program map includes names of courses and credit hours.
3s. Early Childhood through Secondary – Our Vision, Our Mission	No access	2017	Program Document	Faculty	<u>Vison statement alignment to edTPA constructs:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative teaching practices, educational research, community engagement, creative activity (edTPA rubric alignment TASK 1, 2, 3, instructional strategies, theory and research) Appreciation for diverse populations and perspectives (edTPA rubric alignment – respect for diverse perspectives, TASK 1) <u>Mission statement alignment to edTPA constructs:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders who value diversity (edTPA rubric alignment – values diversity), TASK 1 Possess knowledge, skills, and dispositions to positively affect change (edTPA emphasis on student learning outcomes) Academically rigorous, inclusive, and supportive learning environments (academically rigorous – state standard alignment; support learning environment – edTPA rubric alignment – TASK 2 and state standard alignment) Acknowledge and embrace the contributions of all groups within our diverse society – groups formed by: gender, ethnicity, race, culture, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, personal experience (aligned to edTPA rubrics re: knowledge of students TASK 1)

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit of all, combination of many voices and work; equality, social justice (edTPA alignment to equity, TASK 1, 2, 3)
3t. edTPA Institutional Data Analysis	No access	June 2016 July 2017	College Document	College Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of program mean scores on the edTPA in comparison to state highest and lowest averages • Provides guiding questions for program consideration of strengths, needs, and course activities that might address areas for improvement • Provides information for faculty regarding condition codes, rules for submission, and vouchers
3u. edTPA Partner Schools PowerPoint	none	Spring 2017	College Document	College Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented to teachers in Professional Development Schools • Used to clarify roles and guidelines for acceptable candidate support • Addressed fall 2016 teachers' comments regarding their uncertainty of the depth and type of involvement permitted